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U.S. War Savings Staff

A handbook of war  
savings school assembly...

Washington, D.C.

[1943]

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*A Handbook of*  
**WAR SAVINGS**  
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*Prepared by the*  
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# *A Handbook of* **WAR SAVINGS** *School Assembly Programs*

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD WAR SAVINGS PROGRAM?

Wherever people come together—in classrooms, at assemblies, at athletic events, at plays, pageants, sings, concerts, rallies, or meetings, or merely to listen to the radio—at any sort of gathering there's opportunity for the kind of program that sets people swinging *together*, that gives each one of us the kind of lift that comes from seeing his own activities as part of a greater whole, that puts us in a fighting mood, ready to redouble our contribution to the Nation's victory program.

And whenever people find themselves *rarin'* to get out and *do* something, that's the place for a War Savings appeal. There is no other war activity on the home front in which everyone can participate, at any time, with the full knowledge that he is making a genuine contribution to the war effort.

A really successful War Savings program is always one which really moves its audience. The program may have been entirely devoted to War Savings, or it may have been devoted to something else, merely finishing with some rousing songs and a War Savings message.

Entertainment is not enough, instruction is not enough, unless every member of the audience also begins to say to himself before the program is over, "I haven't been doing nearly as much as I could do."

Nothing can move an audience more deeply than a good play, well presented. Other effective attractions are pageants, mock-broadcasts, debates, panel discussions, speeches, singing (or other music), movies, slide films, etc., etc.

If the first requirement in a good War Savings program is that it shall move its audience, the second requirement is that it shall reach the audience it deserves. This is worth keeping in mind—that a good

program which reaches twice the audience, can have twice the value. A classroom project can become a school program, and a school program can be presented in the community, or over the radio, and can be reported in the school and community newspapers.

## POINTS A GOOD WAR SAVINGS PROGRAM SHOULD MAKE

For greatest effectiveness, a good War Savings program will not only inspire its audience, but will also cover (within the main attraction, or through supplementary appeals) as many as possible of the following points:

1. An appeal to patriotism.
2. An appeal to self-interest (it is easy to forget that money invested in War Stamps and Bonds is not *given*, but *lent*—and that bonds pay excellent interest).
3. A review of the three-point importance of the War Savings program to the winning of the war and the winning of the peace.
  - (a) Bonds and Stamps help pay for the weapons which will help win the war and speed the peace.
  - (b) Money put into Bonds and Stamps will help keep prices down—the prices of food, clothing, and rent, as well as the prices of weapons. Everyone wants to be Uncle Sam's partner, not his competitor.
  - (c) *After the war* the money Americans have put into War Bonds will help keep our economy on an even keel while we convert from production for war to production for peace. Insofar as our national debt is owed to all of us, repayment of it will help everyone—help everyone buy the cars, housing, conveniences, travel, etc., we are doing without for the duration—help insure that there will not be a post-war depression.
4. An opportunity for immediate action on the part of the audience.

## SELL WAR SAVINGS STAMPS INSTEAD OF CHARGING ADMISSION

An inspiring program is valuable for its own sake. For greatest effectiveness, however, every program should further the school's War Savings sales campaign. Members of the audience will appreciate an opportunity to act *at once* on the good resolutions to which the program may have inspired them.



Many schools sell stamps one day each week, and remind students the day before to bring their money. A good classroom or assembly program is an excellent reminder. Another good plan is to present the program on the day of the sale, and just before stamps are to be sold.

Programs which reach parents and other members of the community—plays, concerts, sings, rallies, athletic events, exhibits, etc.—can also be planned to include an opportunity to buy stamps and bonds *on the spot*.

Stamps and bonds can be sold at the beginning of a program, or during the program, or at the end—sometimes at both beginning and end.

At almost any program, admission can be on the purchase of a Stamp or Bond to be retained by the purchaser. If a small cash admission charge is necessary to cover expenses, patrons can be asked to pay (say) 15 cents in cash, in addition to buying a 10-cent stamp.

Texas schools have just inaugurated a statewide series of Victory Concerts—free except that every listener must buy a stamp or bond. Bands, orchestras, and choral groups will participate in this program to raise money for War Savings, to keep up morale and to provide free musical entertainment. A billion dollars is the box office goal of the Texas Music Education Association and the State Department of Education who are sponsoring the program.

To determine whether a Federal tax should be charged, simply remember that stamps are the same as cash. If the purchaser keeps the stamp, then he has not actually paid anything for admission, and no tax need be charged. (But if some patrons pay cash, while others merely buy a stamp, then all must be charged the same amount of tax as collected from those who pay cash.)

If, on the other hand, the purchaser must present the stamp to the school or other sponsoring organization, then a tax must be paid just as if payment had been in cash instead of by stamp. A tax must, of course, be collected on all cash admission charges.

#### HOW TO MAKE EFFECTIVE USE OF AN EXIT "CHARGE"

Stamps can be sold, and pledges circulated during intermissions, or as people leave after the show. An "exit charge" is sometimes extremely effective. For instance, after the last burst of applause, a speaker rises or jumps to the platform, and makes some such appeal as this (as, for instance, after the performance of "Message from Bataan"):

"Just one moment, ladies and gentlemen. We all know that we have just been applauding not only these actors and others who were responsible for tonight's entertainment, but also all of those boys who fought in Bataan and those who are still fighting all over the world to keep America free. The actors have heard our applause. But let's send it also to the men overseas in a form which will help to bring them back sooner. Let's turn every handclap into a War Savings Stamp to send bullets and bandages, tanks and planes to the fighting fronts. Let's make our applause echo in Berlin and Tokyo.

"In the back of the hall the students wearing armbands are ready to supply you with War Stamps or Bond order forms. How many of you will buy at least one stamp on your way out? May we have a show of hands? . . . That's fine. That will certainly be the applause heard 'round the world. And be sure to read the next issue of (the school or community newspaper) to learn just how much tonight's applause will mean to the boys in the service. Now let's have another round of applause for tonight's performance and performers."

## *Suggestions for Writing Your Own Scripts*

Program scripts can be obtained in published form (see pp. 11-18), or else they can be written especially for the occasion by the performers or other students.

#### WILLIE WAR STAMP

One second grade class developed the character known as "Willie War Stamp." Willie War Stamp appears in the form of a child holding (or wearing sandwich fashion) a big drawing of a War Stamp.

"I may be only a little 10-cent War Stamp," Willie is always saying, "but you ought to see what I can do."

Suiting action to the word, Willie proceeds to show his admiring audience what he really can do. Willie does this assisted by a sheet, a light bright enough to cast a good shadow on his sheet, assorted war materials (which, Willie explains grandly, he can buy) and a

few generals, admirals, soldiers, sailors, marines, war workers, nurses, and so forth, who make or use the things he buys.

In other words, Willie describes his exploits by standing beside a sheet while his aides-de-camp dramatize in pantomime his great deeds. Shadow plays are good because they are mysterious. Costumes need be no more elaborate than whatever will throw a good shadow. The same goes for props. A first-class tank can be cut out of a magazine ad or picture (use a profile picture), pasted on cardboard which is then trimmed down to the picture.

What Willie shows off about is up to the class, which will not lack for ideas.

#### GOOD INTENTIONS

A third grade class prepared an interesting program showing how easy it is to forget even the best intentions.

The scene is the living room of an American family. Mother helps the children with their spelling, asking them to spell such words as "Bond," "Savings," etc. She then asks them to read some papers which they wrote in school. These stories all stress the importance of buying War Stamps. Later the family tunes in a radio program which turns out to be on a war theme suggesting the purchase of Bonds and Stamps.

Finally, the newsboy comes in, collects 40 cents for papers, and gives father 60 cents change out of a dollar. Father divides the change among the children. Each starts speculating on whether to spend the money for a soda, for candy, for nail polish, etc. Suddenly all realize that all day they have been wishing they had some money for just one purpose—War Stamps. They buy War Stamps from the newsboy.

#### MESSAGE FROM MARS

An interesting program can be worked out on the following theme. Build an oversize radio cabinet large enough so that players can emerge from it and present their number.

The story is that the owner has built this radio in the hopes of hearing messages from Mars. He finds instead that he gets voices of people all over the world. He tunes in voices from (for example) France, the voices become louder, and finally players step from the cabinet and tell the audience how much Frenchmen would give for the opportunities Americans still have to fight for freedom, and to invest in War Stamps. (Voices can also come from Germany, etc.,

including perhaps both Nazi voices and the voices of Germans who hate Hitler.)

#### THE MISER AND HIS GOLD

The familiar fable of the miser and his gold can be turned into an effective War Savings play.

As the curtain rises, the miser appears, digs up his gold, and begins jingling and counting it. He finally hides it again and leaves.

A robber appears from behind a tree, digs up the gold, and goes off with it, meanwhile chuckling over the things he will spend it for.

In the next scene, the robber has been caught, but not before he has squandered the money on fancy clothes and jewelry. The neighbors are outraged at such wasteful spending at a time when Uncle Sam needs every penny, and tend to sympathize with the miser over his loss. But then they ask the miser how it happened that he kept so much money in the ground instead of putting it into War Bonds, thus helping Uncle Sam, and keeping it safe at the same time.

#### MAKING A PLAY OUT OF EVERYDAY LIFE

There are plenty of dramatic incidents taking place everywhere today. The problem is to bring them close to us, to state them in terms of our own lives. Arch Oboler did this when he wrote "Bomber to Tokio"; Edna St. Vincent Millay did it in "Lidice"; Stephen Benet also, in the "Burning of the Books." Many plays and poems will doubtless be inspired for years to come by the scuttling of the French Fleet at Toulon.

It is not necessary, even, to search for an outstanding deed of courage to dramatize. A seemingly insignificant incident out of our own town may serve as the nucleus of an effective play. We have all heard stories of selfishness: the man who chisels on gasoline for his car, the woman who claims that she has to have her six cups of coffee daily and brags that she has plenty stored away. Suppose we take this latter instance as a starting point for our play. What happening could make Mrs. Brown forget her own comfort to the point of wanting to share the sacrifices of her fellow-countrymen?—For Mrs. Brown is not intentionally disloyal. She really believes that she wants to help win this war. She even has a son in the Navy. She thinks she is backing up our soldiers and sailors by knitting for the Red Cross in her spare time, by curtailing her use of the car, by buying war stamps. But she does all this reluctantly, for she still believes that we could have kept out of the war, she resents having her son in the service,

and she feels that through him she is already doing more than her share. The concern of her Polish maid for a brother arriving from Poland leaves her unmoved, for she does not really believe all those stories of German atrocities. And when her husband throws up a lucrative position he had long been seeking and has just achieved, in order to place his special engineering skill at the service of the Army, her first and strongest reaction is one of anger that he has thus endangered *her* security.

What is there that can change this woman's attitude?—It will have to be something that gets through her outer shell of callousness. Her knowledge of the war is mental—not emotional. She knows with her mind that certain sacrifices are necessary; she does not know this with her heart and will; consequently she does not act. But suppose a dear friend of her son's should come back from Europe, half-starved and ill from imprisonment, with stories to tell about shortages of food, and stories about the brutal treatment of prisoners by the Nazis. Suppose later on a letter comes to notify her that her son is a prisoner of the Japanese. By this bringing of the war to her, she would be shaken out of her scepticism and her false security and her selfishness. The woman's indifference to her maid's worries and her anger at her husband's act of patriotism—because both these things affect *her* comfort and complacency—contrast sharply with her forgetfulness of self when the war strikes home to her through her son.

The one-act play is best with a single stage set. The logical meeting place for all the characters would be the family living-room of the Browns. Since Mrs. Brown is a person who loves her comfort and is able financially to satisfy her desires, the furnishings would be luxurious and harmonious. There should be an entrance at center back, leading into a hall, and a window looking toward the street on the right. For the time, it will be convenient to choose mid afternoon, since this will give an excuse for the serving of afternoon coffee and will also occasion comment on the husband's early return from the office. For the characters of the play—besides Mr. and Mrs. Brown—we shall need a woman caller who is an old friend of Mrs. Brown and would therefore be a natural recipient of her confidences about coffee, the war, etc., the Polish maid who brings in the coffee and helps build the mood of the play by her tears for her brother; and the son's friend, a newspaper man just back from France.

The dialogue and business of the play will be built around this framework. First, the opening situation where Mrs. Brown welcomes her friend, apologizing for the coldness of the room.—“It's only 68,

my dear, and John won't let me keep it any warmer. Sometimes I do turn it up when he isn't here. I don't believe there's really any shortage.” She goes to thermostat and raises it, although her friend protests that she is warm enough. When the maid brings in the coffee, Mrs. Brown rebukes her for using the wrong cream pitcher, and the maid leaves the room in tears. “She's been no good to me this week because her brother is expected from Poland and she's worried about where he can stay. He's not well, she says, and she wanted me to have him here—of course that's out of the question.” Another side light on Mrs. Brown's character is her remark about the six cups of coffee she has to have every day. The guest asks about the son and his whereabouts, which is unknown to the family: Another grievance for Mrs. Brown. The guest also inquires for Mr. Brown; whereupon Mrs. Brown describes with enthusiasm her husband's recent promotion to one of the *head positions* in his engineering firm, and what it will mean to them after the war. When the caller doubts a quick ending for the war, Mrs. Brown launches into her favorite subject: The lack of necessity for the war in the first place, the exaggerated propaganda that brought it about, the inconvenience of it, disrupting normal lives, etc. The friend protests against this attitude, but Mrs. Brown is so sure of her own opinions, so confident that the war is remote from her—even though her son is in it—that she is not to be moved.

The phone rings. It is a friend of her son's who wants to come to see her. As she turns away from the phone to come back to her chair, she sees her husband, through the window, coming up the walk. She gives an exclamation of surprise at his early return from the office. When Mr. Brown enters, he starts to tell her about his change of plans, but stops on seeing the visitor. Mrs. Brown tells her husband about her phone call from Jack's friend. Then she offers him some coffee. He refuses with a trace of irritation. The caller leaves. Then Mr. Brown tells his wife about his decision to leave his new job to enter the service. She is so angry that she interrupts him before he has finished, reproaching him for not thinking of *her* interests, etc. When he tries to explain, she will not listen. He turns away, discouraged, goes to thermostat and turns it down with a remark about her lack of cooperation. Just then the son's friend comes and is welcomed warmly by both. Mrs. Brown comments on his loss of weight, his pallor, etc., and his limp. “Tell us all about yourself,” she says. “How I wish Jack could be here, too! I expect you reporters have lots of interesting experiences. But first let me give you some coffee.” The young man comments on the joy of having real coffee again and expresses his

amazement at finding Americans doing just about the same things as before the war. Well, after all, we *are* pretty far away from it," she says. The friend tries to tell her about the food shortages in France but she answers: "I can't see any point in making ourselves uncomfortable just because other people are, when we can't do anything about it." The young man turns to Mr. Brown, who has been pacing the room with repressed energy, and begins to tell him about his experience in a Nazi prison. Mrs. Brown is more shaken by this than she cares to admit, and she goes to the window. "Oh, here comes the postman," she exclaims. As she goes out into the hall for the mail, she hears the young man say: "But I understand the Nazi prison guards are humane compared with the Japs." That's why I'm worrying about Jack," says Mr. Brown, with a glance toward the hall. Mrs. Brown comes back with an official-looking envelope which she hands to her husband. He takes it and tears it open, then hands it to her with no comment. She reads it twice with a dazed look. "Oh, no! It can't be true. Jack can't be a prisoner of the Japanese. I won't have it. It can't be true!" The two men say nothing. She turns on her husband. "Why don't you say it isn't true? Why don't you say something! Don't you care?" Mr. Brown answers: "I tried to tell you when I first came. You wouldn't listen. I tried to tell you that was why I am quitting business for the service." "But what can I do? I can't sit doing nothing with Jack a prisoner over there!"—"You can do—everything you have not been willing to do," her husband answers. "Everything that will help win the war." The Polish maid comes to the door. "Please, Mrs. Brown, you want more coffee?" "No, Mary," says Mrs. Brown; "no more coffee." "Please, Mrs. Brown, I go now meet my brother. O.K.?" "Yes, Mary," answers Mrs. Brown. "And Mary, bring your brother back here."

## *Where to Find Published Program Material —Government*

The Education Section of the War Savings Staff in the Treasury Department offers in this Handbook five plays on War Savings themes of special interest to schools.

"You Can Count on Us" and "Message from Bataan" are plays suitable for production in Junior and Senior High Schools. *Star for a Day* is perhaps best adapted for production in Junior High Schools. "We Will Do Our Share" and "For the Duration" are plays that can be used effectively in Grades 4 to 8.

Three other tested War Savings plays, prepared primarily for Women's Clubs, are available on request. They are "Mother Buys a Bond", "Day's Work for America", and "Father Wins the Peace". The scripts are available on request to the Women's Section, War Savings Staff, U. S. Treasury Department, Washington, D. C. Also available from this office is a useful handbook entitled, "Minute Women at War", which contains useful hints on "How to put on a rally," "How to arrange for a parade," "How to do a community sing," "How to put on a stamp dance," "How to organize a stamp day," "How to stage a bond pageant," etc.

If a parade is being considered, some useful suggestions are to be found in the *Schools-at-War Parade and Ceremony Manual*. This was prepared especially to aid in the producing of a parade and ceremony to inaugurate the Schools at War program on November 9, the second day of American Education Week, but its suggestions apply equally well to any parade on any date.

Helpful ideas on how to use music on War Savings programs are to be found in two "kits" prepared jointly by the Education Section, War Savings Staff, Treasury Department, and the Music Educators National Conference. The first, *Music Educators in the Schools-at-War Program*, contains a suggested program for a school or community Victory Sing. The second, "Songs for Schools at War", contains piano arrangements of "Any Bonds To-day?", "Everybody, Ev'ry Pay Day", "Lend Till It Hurts the Axis", and "Soldiers All", and also

contains catchy War Bond words to many an old favorite tune. Both kits may be obtained on request to the Education Section, War Savings Staff, Washington, D. C., or to the Music Educators National Conference, 64 East Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Ill.

Those interested should also write to the Music Educators National Conference at the above address for information about their complete Program for Music Education in Wartime.

#### RADIO SCRIPTS

Radio scripts are valuable both for actual broadcast use, and for "mock-broadcasts" within the school. A large number of excellent scripts are available to anyone through a circulating library service maintained by the U. S. Office of Education. For a list of these scripts, and directions for borrowing them, write to the Educational Radio Script and Transcription Exchange, Federal Radio Education Committee, U. S. Office of Education, Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C. Ask for their catalog, "Radio Scripts for Victory" and, if interested, for their catalog, "Radio Transcriptions for Victory."

#### SLIDE FILMS

An effective 10-minute War Savings slide film entitled, "The Free American Way," was recently produced and distributed by the Coca-Cola Co. as an aid to the War Savings program. Your local Coca-Cola bottling firm will be glad to arrange a showing of this slide film in your school.

For information and lists of other slide film material, write to the American Society for Visual Education, 100 East Ohio Street, Chicago, Ill.

#### WAR SAVINGS MOTION PICTURES

A 10-minute, 16-mm. sound film entitled, "Bonds at War," is obtainable through State War Savings offices, or through the firm Modern Talking Pictures, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City.

A 22-minute, 16-mm. sound film entitled "The Price of Freedom" (produced by International Harvester, as a record of its successful 10-percent drive), is obtainable through State War Savings offices.

#### FILMS OF GENERAL WAR INTEREST

A wide variety of 16-mm. Government war films can be obtained from 150 established film libraries and film rental agencies throughout the country. Groups should write directly to their usual sources of 16-mm. film. A complete list of all distributors, and information as

to films available may be obtained by writing to the Office of War Information, Bureau of Motion Pictures, 1400 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C. The cost of using Government films has been kept at a minimum: The expenses of transportation, plus a distributor's service charge of not more than 50 cents for the first subject and 25 cents for each additional subject included in a single shipment. Films may also be purchased at very moderate prices.

## *Where to Find Published Program Material —Non-Government*

Nearly every play publisher has been busy during the past year finding and issuing play material of war significance. An excellent catalog of this material can be obtained free on request to Baker's Plays, 178 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass., or Baker's Plays, 448 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, Calif. Ask for "A Parade of Patriotic Plays and Program Material." This catalog lists plays of all publishers, not just Baker plays.

#### COLLECTIONS OF PLAY AND PROGRAM MATERIAL

Some collections of play and program material which have been called to the attention of the Education Section of the War Savings Staff are:

**TREASURY STAR PARADE.** Edited by William A. Bacher. \$2.50. Farrar & Rinehart. 1942. *25 of the best Treasury Star Parade scripts.*

**PLAYS OF PATRIOTISM FOR YOUNG AMERICANS.** Edited by S. Emerson Golden. \$2.50. Dodd Mead. 1942. *16 nonroyalty plays.*

V FOR VICTORY: PLAYS AND ENTERTAINMENTS. Edited by Rehn Scarborough. 128 pp. 75¢. Baker's Plays. 1942. *Nonroyalty readings, orations, pageants, minstrels, recitations, and plays.*

THE WAY OF THE U. S. A. A Handbook of Democracy and Patriotism by Dorothy Middlebrook Shipment. 172 pp. 60¢. Dramatic Publishing Co. 1941. *Nonroyalty material including 2 complete assembly programs, 8 skits and plays, 6 pageants, etc.*

PATRIOTIC PLAYS AND PROGRAMS FOR ALL GRADES. Reprinted from the magazine, "The Grade Teacher." 80 pp. 75¢. Educational Pub. Corp. 1942. *A useful index enables the reader to turn to plays, recitations, songs, pageants, and programs for a given occasion, a given grade, a given number of children, etc.*

PLAYS FOR AMERICANS. By Arch Oboler. 271 pp. \$2.50. Farrar & Rinehart. 1942. *13 new nonroyalty plays.*

THIS FREEDOM. By Arch Oboler. 239 pp. \$2.00. Random House. 1942. *13 new radio plays, including 3 nonroyalty plays, with notes on acting and production.*

THE FREE COMPANY PRESENTS. Anderson (Maxwell), Anderson (Sherwood), Benet, MacLeish, Boyd, Green, Welles, Connelly, Sherwood, and Saroyan. 312 pp. \$2.00. Dodd Mead. 1941. *10 plays about the meaning of America.*

#### PLAYS ON WAR SAVINGS THEMES

A number of private publishers have issued plays on War Savings themes. Two are reprinted in "Plays of Patriotism for Young Americans," mentioned above, and four others are reprinted in "Patriotic Plays and Programs for all Grades." Others include:

LINE UP FOR VICTORY. By A. S. Burack. 25¢. Baker's Plays. (*Especially suitable for Junior High Schools. 6 characters.*)

ALL OUT FOR UNCLE SAM AND STATION U. S. A., both by Effa E. Preston. Each 35¢. Denison. 1942. (*Play-pageants for grades 4-6, with 20 to 50 speaking parts.*)

THE EXTRAVAGANT WILSONS. By Bertha Dorothy Brown. 10¢ plus postage. McGuin Publishing Co. 1942. (*For grades 5-9, 8 characters.*)

#### PLAYS OF PATRIOTIC (BUT NOT NECESSARILY WAR SAVINGS) INTEREST

##### *Nonroyalty Plays*

NOTE.—Even where no fee is charged for a performance of a copyright play, by an amateur group, the publisher usually requires that the group purchase enough copies to supply the various characters. *Copying a play, in whole or in part, by any method, is a violation of the copyright.*

AMERICA IN ACTION. A series of 12 one-act plays intended primarily for High Schools, edited by Herman Hagedorn. Each plays from 20 to 25 minutes. All 12 may be purchased in a single volume at \$2.00, or singly at 30¢ each. Dramatists Play Service.

HAVEN OF THE SPIRIT. By Merrill Denison. (*Roger Williams and religious tolerance.*)

FRANKLIN AND THE KING. By Paul Green. (*Franklin at the court of King George III.*)

SHIP FOREVER SAILING. By Stanley Young. *The origin of the Mayflower Pact.*

WE'D NEVER BE HAPPY OTHERWISE. By E. P. Conkle. *Elijah Lovejoy's martyrdom for the sake of freedom of the press.*

ENTER WOMEN. By Olivia Howard Dunbar. *The foundation of the women's rights movement.*

FIRES AT VALLEY FORGE. By Barrett H. Clark. *Washington shows American youth how it can help win victory.*

A SALUTE TO THE FOURTH. By Elizabeth McFadden. *Race tolerance and patriotism.*

SEEING THE ELEPHANT. By Dan Totheroh. *About the courage of the 49'ers.*

COMMON SENSE. By Ridgely Torrence. *How Tom Paine converted the enemy to his ideas.*

YOUNG HICKORY. By Stanley Young. *Young Andrew Jackson traps an enemy officer and converts his men.*

THE THREE ROYAL R'S. By Mary Thurman Pyle. *Jefferson as a young man, and the beginnings of democratic education.*

THE U. S. VS. SUSAN B. ANTHONY. By Merrill Denison. *The famous trial of the women's rights leader.*

- CLARION CALL. By Harry Weinberger. 35¢. Dramatists Play Service. *A free press play based on the famous trial of John Peter Zenger.*
- FOR ALL. By Max Epstein. 40 pp. 35¢. Dramatic Pub. Co. 1941. *A pageant on democracy and Americansim for any number of boys and girls. For Junior High Schools.*
- FUN TO BE FREE. By Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur. 30¢. Dramatists Play Service. *A patriotic pageant for grades 6 and up, and for any number of characters.*
- GIRLS OF THE U. S. A. By Peggy Fernway. 46 pp. 35¢. Samuel French. 1942. *All female cast. A comedy for high schools which drives home the lesson that the war means a job to be done by everyone, young and old.*
- OUR HERITAGE. By Harold G. Sliker. 24 pp. 35¢. Samuel French. 1941. *A tribute to the American Bill of Rights in the form of a pageant for any number of boys and girls.*
- WASTE HELPS THE ENEMY and AT YOUR SERVICE, MEN IN ARMS. By Bertha Dorothy Brown. Each 10¢. 1942. Moguin Pub. Co. *Plays about conservation and waste, respectively.*
- WE, AMERICANS. By Harry L. Ringle. 35¢. Dramatic Publishing Co. 1941. *For any number of boys and girls.*

#### Royalty Plays

NOTE.—A wide variety of excellent one-act and full-length plays is offered by the various publishers, who will be glad to send full information on request. A few one-act plays are listed below. The fee noted is for one amateur performance.

- THE DEVIL AND DANIEL WEBSTER. By Stephen Vincent Benet. 35¢. Dramatists Play Service. Fee: \$5.00. *A favorite folk comedy.*
- ETERNAL LIFE. By Fred Eastman. 24 pp. 35¢. Samuel French. 1941. Fee: \$5. 3 m. 3 w. *Three days trapped in an air raid shelter with only faith in God to avert despair.*
- LAWYER LINCOLN. By Betty Smith and Chase Webb. 35¢. Dramatists Play Service. Fee: \$5. *One-act comedy.*
- PARTING AT IMSDORF. By N. Richard Nusbaum. 48 pp. 35¢. Samuel French. 1940. Fee: \$5. 4 m. 1 w. *First prize in the contest sponsored by the Religious Drama Council of the Greater New York Federation of Churches.*

#### A FEW BOOKS ABOUT PRODUCING AND DIRECTING PLAYS

- GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF PLAY DIRECTION. By Gilmor Brown and Alice Garwood. \$2.00. Samuel French. 1936. *Valuable manual for directors, with glossary of terms.*
- OFFSTAGE. By Marguerite Fellows Melcher. \$1.50. Alfred A. Knopf. 1938. *How to make plays from stories. For teachers and children.*
- STAGE MANAGEMENT FOR THE AMATEUR THEATRE. By William Perdue Halstead. \$3.50. F. S. Crofts & Co. 1937. *Practical handbook covering all aspects of directing and producing in School Theatres and Little Theatres. Has valuable bibliographical index of works on stage craft.*
- THE STAGE IN ACTION. By Samuel Selden. \$2.75. F. S. Crofts & Co. 1941. *Careful analysis of all the elements that go into the making of a play.*

#### SOURCE MATERIALS FOR MAKING YOUR OWN PLAYS

There are many collections of historical incidents which often suggest ideas for writing your own plays and pageants. One of the most recent of such collections is, "For Love of Country", 19 stories of young patriots selected by Wilhelmina Harper (257 pp., \$2. Dutton. 1942). Any librarian can recommend others.

# PLAY PUBLISHERS—ADDRESSES

The following publishers, mentioned above, are glad to send their catalogs on request. Address:

Baker's Plays. 178 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass.; 448 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, Calif.  
 F. S. Crofts & Co., 41 Union Square, West, New York, N. Y.  
 T. S. Denison & Co., 225 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Ill.  
 Dodd, Mead & Co., 449 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y.  
 The Dramatic Publishing Co., 59 East Van Buren Street, Chicago, Ill.  
 Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 6 East 39th Street, New York, N. Y.  
 Farrar & Rinehart, 232 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.  
 Samuel French. 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.; 811 West 7th Street, Los Angeles, Calif.  
 Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 501 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.  
 McGuin Publishing Co., Wichita, Kans.  
 Plays, The Drama Magazine for Young People, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, Mass.  
 Random House, Inc., 20 East 57th Street, New York, N. Y.

# You Can Count On Us\*

by BERNARD J. REINES

## Characters

RECRUITING SERGEANT, U. S. Army.

YOUNG MAN.

JOHNNY.

FRED.

JOE.

KAY.

SALLY.

CAPTAIN, U. S. Army.

ROBERT MORRIS.

MRS. MORRIS, his wife.

MERCHANT.

BANKER.

HAYM SOLOMON.

SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (1917).

FOUR FINANCIAL ADVISERS.

SETTING: *An Army recruiting station.*

AT RISE: A RECRUITING SERGEANT is seated at desk, facing left, glancing over an enlistment blank. In another chair sits an eager youth of about 20, hat in hand.

SERGEANT: Hm. Looks okay to me. (Looking up.) Report for your physical examination . . . (He glances at a sheet of paper on the desk) . . . Wednesday morning at 10:30.

YOUNG MAN (Rising, happily):

Yes, sir! (SERGEANT goes off right with the blank. As YOUNG MAN walks to left, he collides with a group of three boys and two girls entering quickly. Johnny, a slim, athletic-looking boy, is in the lead.)

YOUNG MAN: Sorry. (He goes off as the youngsters look about the room.)

JOHNNY: This is the place all right.

SALLY (small, wears glasses; is a bit of a show-off, but in a cute rather than offensive way; claiming the credit): I found the address in the phone book. (SERGEANT reenters from right.)

SERGEANT (surprised): Well! . . . What can I do for you? (They all look at JOHNNY—evidently the appointed spokesman.)

JOHNNY (stepping forward): We want to enlist, sir.

FRED (excitable; his words tend to fall all over each other): We—we want to sign up for the air force.

JOE (small, dark, tough-mannered): An' give it back to 'em good!

SERGEANT (amazed; smiles to himself for a moment, then looks serious): You do, eh? (He looks at the girls.) And you?

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KAY (*sturdy athletic*): Sally and I want to be nurses. You'll need a lot of nurses.

SALLY: I'm awful smart. I could be a head nurse.

SERGEANT (*gravely*): I see . . . This way, please. (*He goes and sits behind desk.*) (To JOHNNY.) What's your name, young man?

JOHNNY (*quickly*): Johnny Dunn—that is, John M. Dunn, sir.

SERGEANT: How old are you, Johnny?

JOHNNY (*after hesitation*): Almost fourteen . . . (*eagerly*). I was thirteen more than two months ago.

SERGEANT: Uh-huh. (To JOE.) Your name, son?

JOE (*eagerly*): Joe Vitale . . . (*As an afterthought*) . . . sir.

SERGEANT: Age?

JOE (*frowns, then low*): I'll be twelve in May. (*Quickly.*) But I can lick any fellow in my class! I'm tough.

SERGEANT (*solemnly*): I'll bet you are. (To FRED) And you?

FRED (*excitably, as always*): Fred Miller—I mean Frederick Mason Miller, sir! I'm close to fifteen—and big for my age! (*He draws himself up to look as tall as possible.*) I can make all kinds of model airplanes. I'd make a swell pilot—with a little more training.

JOE (*quickly*): We all make model airplanes. The best! (*as an afterthought*)—sir.

KAY (*quickly*): I'm a Girl Scout.

SALLY (*quickly*): I'm very handy—at 'most anything.

JOHNNY: You see, sir—we all want to help win the war.

SERGEANT (*smiling*): I certainly do see. (*He rises and goes to them.*) I'm sorry, but you're all too young to fight—or to be nurses. (*The youngsters look crestfallen.*)

JOHNNY (*after a moment; quickly*): But Sergeant . . . (*slower*) well, we thought we *might* be a little too young for pilots—but can't we join up for *something*?

FRED: Maybe in the Navy? We could be cabin boys.

SERGEANT: They don't have those any more.

JOE: How about the drum corps? I'm a swell drummer.

SERGEANT (*smiling; then serious*): I'm sorry—you're much too young. (*They look very sad, and turn away.*) But . . . there are other ways you can help win the war.

ALL (*turning back quickly*): How? SERGEANT: There are plenty of things to be done besides fighting.

JOHNNY: For instance?

SERGEANT (*after a pause*): You could help put weapons into the hands of the men who do the fighting . . . Supply them with guns, planes, tanks.

FRED (*incredulously*): Who—us?

KAY (*quickly*): How?

SERGEANT: By lending money to pay for them. By buying Savings Stamps and Bonds.

ALL (*greatly let down*): Aw! . . .

SALLY: That's not my idea of—

JOE: We want action!

FRED: We want to do something that really counts.

SERGEANT: Money counts. In every war our country has fought, money's been mighty important. Do you realize that we might not have won our independence, back in the Revolutionary War, if patriotic Americans hadn't been willing to lend their money to our struggling young government?

FRED: I don't remember reading about that.

SERGEANT: I can tell you about one time during the Revolutionary War when things certainly looked dark for us—dark, but with one big chance for victory. A chance that depended on . . . money.

JOHNNY: When was that?

SALLY (*eagerly*): Tell us!

SERGEANT: It was near the end of the summer of 1781. The United States had been fighting the British for 6 long years, with no decision in sight. In the city of Philadelphia, Robert Morris, a patriotic merchant and banker had set to work energetically to find ways and means of carrying on the war. (*Curtains starts to descend slowly.*)

One day he invited other well-to-do patriots to his house. . . .

(*Curtain down. Soon it rises on a room in Robert Morris' house in Philadelphia. Seated are a long, lean BANKER, a portly MERCHANT, and HAYM SOLOMON. ROBERT MORRIS, stout and middle-aged, stands with an elbow leaning on the top of a high-backed chair at right, thoughtful. MRS. MORRIS, his wife, is putting a tray of cups and saucers on the table. Finishing, she turns.*)

MRS. MORRIS: Excuse me, Robert, but tea will be ready whenever you and your guests are.

MORRIS: Thank you, dear. (*MRS. MORRIS goes out left. MORRIS sits down.*)

MERCHANT (*genial but shrewd*): Well, Mr. Morris, I must say we hardly expected a successful man of business like yourself would accept the position of Superintendent of Finance from the Congress. The war drags on, our French allies have done very little so far, the treasury is empty, the country is flooded with worthless paper money. Whatever can you expect to accomplish—other than your own ruin?

MORRIS: I shall strive, Mr. Craigie, to restore the public credit—and to obtain the means to carry our war for independence to a successful conclusion. (*He glances from one to the other, and*

*says slowly:*) In this I ask your help, gentlemen.

BANKER (*drily*): On what grounds Mr. Morris?

MORRIS: On the grounds that whoever loves his country and liberty should be willing to run risks in order to secure its blessings to himself and his posterity; that this is all the more to be expected from those who, like ourselves, have prospered here in America.

SOLOMON (*interestedly*): What are your plans?

MORRIS: I propose, Mr. Solomon, to establish a bank—a Bank of North America—whose credit would be sustained by the integrity and reputation of its stockholders—among whom I would have the honor of counting myself and other patriotic men of affairs. This bank would issue good paper money, retire bad paper money, and lend its funds to the government of the United States.

MERCHANT (*after a pause; doubtfully*): That is a vast undertaking.

MORRIS: Not so vast as the war itself. (*Impassioned.*) Gentlemen, consider the stakes for which this war is being fought: our liberty, our prosperity, our happiness, the status of free men in a free land. Does not such a cause merit whatever sacrifices are necessary to its triumph? (*He looks at them*

*appealingly. Just then Mrs. MORRIS enters excitedly. The men all rise.*)

MRS. MORRIS: There is a letter for you, Robert. It may be important, so I thought it best to bring it right in.

MORRIS: Of course, Mary. (*She hands it to him. He breaks open the seal.*)

MRS. MORRIS (*excusing herself*): Gentlemen. (*She goes out. The others sit again and watch MORRIS' face as he reads the letter rapidly.*)

MORRIS (*greatly excited at first, but soon keeping his feelings under control*): Gentlemen, a message from General Washington! The business of the bank will need to wait—there is a more urgent matter at hand!

SOLOMON (*eagerly; guessing*): The General feels the time is ripe for a major move against the British!

MORRIS: Yes. There is good news, gentlemen! A great French fleet under the Count de Grasse is on its way to our shores, to cooperate with us!

MERCHANT: At last! That is good news.

MORRIS: Well, gentlemen—the Commander-in-Chief is ready. He writes that if he can at once be given the necessary supplies—and cash with which to pay his soldiers—he can strike a decisive blow against the enemy.

(*After a pause, solemnly.*) Will we furnish the means, gentlemen?

BANKER (*doubtfully*): What is this blow he plans?

MERCHANT: Oh, everyone knows, Mr. Jarvis. To lay siege to the British forces under Lord Clinton in New York City.

MORRIS: No, gentlemen . . . (*The others look surprised.*) . . . That is what everyone *thinks* General Washington will do—and we wish them to go on thinking so. His real plan must be kept secret until his troops are well on their way. (*He pauses and looks at them questioningly.*)

MERCHANT (*solemnly*): Agreed.

BANKER. Of course. (*SOLOMON nods.*)

MORRIS: His real plan is . . . (*He lowers his voice, and the others lean forward*) . . . to make a swift march southward to Virginia and—together with the French fleet, which will appear off Chesapeake Bay—bottle up the British army under Lord Cornwallis, and compel their surrender . . . at Yorktown! (*The guests look at each other.*)

MERCHANT (*after a pause*): Why that's—that's brilliant!

MORRIS: It may well win the war for us . . . But gentlemen, as General Washington emphasizes in his letter, to succeed he must have money and supplies.

. . . (*Slowly*). Will we furnish them? (*Pause.*)

SOLOMON (*rising*): I shall lend whatever I have and whatever I can raise . . . And I shall still feel it is all too little . . . for a country where all men are free and equal. (*MORRIS gives him a look of gratitude, then turns to the others. The MERCHANT and the BANKER glance at each other, hesitating.*)

MORRIS (*rising*): Gentlemen, I am willing to pledge both my public and my private credit as security for whatever sums you can lend.

MERCHANT (*after a pause, as he and BANKER rise*): It will not be easy for me—but I'll do what I can.

BANKER: Mr. Morris, I am with you.

MORRIS (*excited and happy*): Thank you, gentlemen! I shall see that you have the details by nightfall. And tonight I shall offer a toast: To Yorktown—and victory! (*Curtain. When it rises, the scene is the recruiting office again.*)

SALLY: He was right about it. Yorktown was where we won the war.

JOE: Oh, anybody knows that. (*CAPTAIN enters in time to hear the last sentence. Seeing him, the SERGEANT interrupts JOE by snapping to attention and saluting.*)

CAPTAIN (after answering salute, gruffly): Well! Things certainly look different at this office, Sergeant.

SERGEANT: Yes, sir. *(All the youngsters draw themselves up to attention.)*

CAPTAIN: What's going on?

SERGEANT *(indicating the group)*: Volunteers, sir.

CAPTAIN: Oh. *(Relaxing, with a smile.)* Fine spirit, but a bit under age. *(To the youngsters)* At ease. *(They relax.)*

SERGEANT: I was telling them how they could help win the war, though, by buying stamps and bonds. Went back a bit into history—to the Yorktown campaign, sir.

JOE *(takes a step forward and stands at attention)*: May I say something—*(remembering)* sir?

CAPTAIN: Certainly.

JOE: Money may have been important in those days all right—in old-fashioned wars—but nowadays things are different.

CAPTAIN *(to Joe)*: Money is always essential in war, son, and in modern times more than ever. I saw how it worked out in the World War . . . *(Pauses)* . . . It happens that an uncle of mine attended an important conference with the Secretary of the Treasury back at the beginning of that war. Shall I tell you about it?

JOE *(eagerly)*: Please do.

ALL: Tell us.

CAPTAIN: In April, 1917, just after we had declared war on Germany, various financial advisers were called to the Treasury Department in Washington for a meeting with the Secretary of the Treasury. . . .

*(Curtain down, then rises on a room in the Treasury Department. The 1ST and 2ND ADVISERS are seated at the ends of the table, facing each other; they are studying tables of figures on sheets of paper before them. The 3RD ADVISER stands in deep thought downstage left, while the 4TH paces back and forth diagonally across the upstage right corner.)*

4TH ADVISER *(halting and looking off right)*: Gentlemen—the Secretary of the Treasury. *(All rise and face right as SECRETARY enters. He is a tall, lean man of about fifty; his face is careworn and deeply lined. He carries a folder with papers.)*

SECRETARY: Good afternoon, gentlemen. *(He goes to central chair and sits. The 1ST and 2ND ADVISERS resume their seats. The 3RD ADVISER takes the chair at SECRETARY's left, the 4TH ADVISER takes chair at SECRETARY's right.)*

SECRETARY *(taking papers from folder and glancing at them briefly)*: Well, gentlemen, I have studied your various recommendations. I have discussed them with the President, with the

leaders of both parties in Congress, and with other advisers. all are agreed that this war will be on a scale like no other war of the past. We shall need a vast army, a huge navy, and great quantities of fighting machines. You've studied the schedules, of course. *(All nod.)*

1ST ADVISER: I believe that all the estimates are too low. This is modern warfare—machine-age warfare—and it will cost tremendous sums of money.

SECRETARY: Our problem is how to raise this money.

4TH ADVISER: You have my proposals. There is only one answer—taxation. Heavy taxation.

1ST ADVISER: It would be impossible—and if not impossible, most unwise—to try to finance such a great war by taxation alone. We must appeal to the people to lend money to the government. We must have loans—issue bonds, open to public subscription.

4TH ADVISER *(heatedly)*: You'll never raise enough money by voluntary methods! Only the heaviest taxes will do it!

SECRETARY *(after a pause, to 1ST ADVISER)*: How much of the cost of the war do you think we can raise by government bonds?

1ST ADVISER *(slowly)*: I think it should be half and half, Mr. Secretary. We can raise half by taxes and half by bonds.

4TH ADVISER *(excitedly)*: It's fantastic! You can't expect enough people to subscribe of their own free will.

SECRETARY *(on his feet quickly)*: I can and I do! I believe the American people will gladly invest in government bonds to help win the war. *(Slowly)* I am going to ask for authority to issue, as a first step, a loan of . . . two billion dollars in bonds.

4TH ADVISER *(aghast)*: Two billion dollars! But Mr. Secretary! SECRETARY: I believe the American people will gladly answer the call to lend their government not only the first two billion, but many billion more. *(1ST, 2D and 3D ADVISERS nod slowly.)*

1ST ADVISER: What will you call the bonds, Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY *(after a pause)*: We'll name them after the cause we are fighting for . . . Liberty. *(The ADVISERS look at each other, stirred.)* Yes . . . Liberty Bonds! *(They look up at him as curtain descends. Then it rises again on the recruiting office.)*

JOHNNY: Did they . . . get the two billion, sir?

CAPTAIN *(smiling)*: I'll say they did! The war lasted only a year and a half from the time we went in. It cost us over thirty billion dollars . . . *(JOHNNY whistles)* . . . and the people of the United States, in five Liberty and Victory Loans, lent

their government over twenty-one billion dollars.

SALLY (*awed*): Twenty-one billion . . . !

CAPTAIN: Two-thirds of the whole cost. What do you think of that? (*The youngsters are impressed. But now they remain silent, thinking their own thoughts, and somehow strangely depressed. The CAPTAIN looks them over, puzzled.*)

CAPTAIN: Well! I thought you'd be happy to know you could help win the war with your money. Now you realize how important money is, don't you?

JOHNNY (*after looking at the others, who seem of one opinion*): 'Course we do, Captain. But it looks like we fellows and girls are out of it, worse than ever.

CAPTAIN: How do you figure that?

JOHNNY: Well, this war is going to take even more money than the last one—billions more. . . .

CAPTAIN: That's right.

JOHNNY: Well, if we were bankers—or rich—or were grown up and had good jobs, we could put up money—real money. But I get fifty cents a week for spending money. Some of us get a little more. And some don't get even that. . . .

CAPTAIN: I don't think you realize what you can do. In a war like this, everybody can do something to help win. Do you know that anyone buying even a ten-cent savings stamp is putting five

cartridges into an American soldier's rifle?

FRED (*surprised and pleased*): For a dime?

CAPTAIN: There are some thirty million boys and girls in our public schools. If each one of them, on an average—allowing for those who can't afford to save anything and for those who can save more—if each boy and girl bought only one ten-cent savings stamp every week, do you know how much that would come to in a year?

SALLY (*quickly*): Don't tell us—I can figure it out!

CAPTAIN (*smiling*): Go ahead.

SALLY: Thirty million dimes a week is . . . (*impressed*) three million dollars a week is . . . (*greatly impressed*) a hundred and fifty-six million dollars a year!

CAPTAIN: Right. Enough to pay for six hundred bombing planes. Or for over two thousand tanks. Or for seventy-five hundred anti-aircraft guns.

FRED: Wow! (*The youngsters are all tremendously impressed.*)

JOHNNY (*after a pause, thoughtfully*): I could save a quarter a week and hardly miss it. In fact, I could save more. . . .

CAPTAIN (*smiling*): If every boy and girl could save an average of a quarter a week . . .

SALLY (*quickly*): I'll tell you . . . (*she calculates rapidly*) . . . times two and a half is . . . three

hundred and ninety million dollars!

CAPTAIN (*smiling*): I see you get the idea. The trick is to buy the savings stamps regularly. Every week. No matter how little you can save, if you do it regularly, it will mount up before you know it to a very substantial sum. You can exchange your stamps for bonds. And when the war is over and your bonds mature, you'll get it all back . . . with interest.

SERGEANT: There are other angles, too. For instance, you can ask your parents to buy war bonds. If they've already bought some, ask them whether they can buy more . . . and more . . . as many as they can afford. (*All the youngsters but JOE now look happy. JOE remains very sad.*)

JOHNNY (*proudly, looking at the others*): There are thirty million of us. We can do plenty! (*As they turn towards one another they notice that JOE is very miserable. His head is hanging, his hands are in his pockets. The others quiet down. The CAPTAIN notices JOE, too.*)

JOE (*feeling he must explain, slowly*): I don't get any money, except for—expenses. My family can't afford it.

CAPTAIN: Oh. (*Not looking at JOE now, quietly*): When I said everybody can help win this war, I meant everybody. (JOE

*slowly looks up at him.*) Those who don't have money to save could earn money, if they really wanted to.

JOE (*after a pause, with rising hope*): How—sir?

CAPTAIN: Well, there are many ways. For example, collecting old metal and rubber and selling it to a junk man. You get a pretty good price now—and it helps cut down waste, too.

JOE (*suddenly smiling*): I could do that—easily!

CAPTAIN: A few hours each week, and you'll be able to save more than the average.

KAY: I've got an idea! There's no reason why I can't save something out of my allowance—and raise extra money, too!

CAPTAIN: Good girl!

SALLY: I can stay in and mind people's children when they want to go out to a movie or someplace! Once a week would be like nothing at all.

JOHNNY (*enthused*): I've got a bike. Bet I could do errands with it and make enough to buy plenty of stamps!

FRED (*excitedly*): I can . . . I can . . . (*vexed*). Oh, I'll think of something.

SERGEANT: Well, JOE, see what you started. (*They all turn to the CAPTAIN and SERGEANT.*)

JOHNNY: Thanks a million, sir!

JOE (*beaming*): For all of us!

CAPTAIN: It's been well said:

Money is the weapon with which weapons are made. In this war, every single American—man, woman, child—is really “in the army.” And the more each of us does—in whatever way he can—the quicker will be our victory!

JOHNNY (*drawing himself up*): You can count on us, sir. (*They all stand at attention, in a straight line now. The CAPTAIN looks at them proudly and draws himself up to attention.*)

# CURTAIN

NOTE.—This play is written in a form which permits very simple production, without scenery and with only a few props.

Some military costumes are indicated, but these may be sufficiently represented by the use of soldiers' hats and helmets alone.

(Even these costumes may be omitted, where not available, since the Narrator describes each setting and “places” the characters upon entrance. Where no costuming is used, it is all the more important that the military characters carry themselves like soldiers, upright and assured in bearing.)

The form of the play generally is that of the “Our Town” technique, used by Thornton Wilder in that distinguished drama; but it has antecedents at least as far back as the Elizabethan drama of Shakespeare and his fellow playwrights. It relies on the imagination of the audience to furnish out the scenery and many details of properties and costume.

Given a few proper directions, audiences never fail—particularly young audiences.

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## Message from Bataan\*

A Play for Junior and Senior High Schools

### Characters

NARRATOR.

BILL RAND, 24.

ALEC MARTENKO, about BILL's age.

CAPTAIN.

MR. RAND, middle-aged.

MRS. RAND, middle-aged.

JOHNNY RAND, 13.

STANLEY MARTENKO, about JOHNNY's age.

MARY MARTENKO, a couple of years younger.

SOLDIER.

SOLDIER, with a bandaged leg.

NURSE—U. S. Army (or if desired, a DOCTOR may be used instead).

FILIPINO SOLDIER.

CAPTAIN IN THE BATAAN ARMY.

(*Curtain rises on a bare stage. No scenery, no properties.*) The NARRATOR enters, in well-worn clothes. He looks the audience over for a while before speaking.

NARRATOR (*speaks informally, plainly. He might be your corner grocer, or your letter-carrier, or your family doctor stopping to chat after a sickness in your family has been cared for success-*

fully). Friends . . . fellow-Americans . . . you're here to see a play about War Savings Stamps and Bonds . . . and you will.

But this is not going to be a play about statistics, dollars, and cents . . . you know, so many-and-so-many stamps and bonds will buy so-many-and-so-many bullets, rifles, tanks, airplanes.

Those statistics are mighty important, there's no denying . . . But right now all we aim to do is to give you just a little idea of what the war brought home to one American family, and particularly to one boy, Johnny Rand, when his brother Bill became a soldier. (*He takes off his glasses, wipes them with a pocket handkerchief, and puts them in his pocket as he proceeds.*)

But I'm getting a little ahead of myself. I just want to mention that in this play the scene shifts from places in a town right here in the U. S. A., 'way across the Pacific to the peninsula of Bataan in the Philippines, and back again, as necessary. But I'll be here between shifts, to keep things straight for you and to fill in with—I trust—helpful remarks.

And, oh yes . . . we don't aim to be realistic about the settings and such in this play. It would tie down our action too much and would be an

expense we're not anxious to go to these days . . . (*with a mild chuckle*). Rather put the money into War Savings Stamps and Bonds, of course . . . And anyhow, it gives you a chance to use your imagination a bit, which can be much more fun.

One last thing before we begin . . . to give credit where credit is due. The name of this play is MESSAGE FROM BATAAN. It is presented on behalf of the War Savings Program of the Treasury Department, and is Acted for you by the -----

-----  
under the direction of -----  
-----

(*He moves to downstage, left, and halts.*)

All ready now. The first scene pretty much speaks for itself. The time is January 1941, almost a year before Pearl Harbor shot us into the war. But Congress has passed the Selective Service Act, and we're getting ready for what's ahead, in a slow sort of way.

Among the young fellows whose numbers have come up in the draft, are Johnny Rand's big brother Bill, and Bill's friend, Alec Martenko. They're in the other room there (*indicating*) just getting through with their various examinations. . . . I nearly forgot a very important point: Both Bill and Alec have asked to be assigned to avia-

tion cadet training. Both want to be flyers. . . . Here they come. . . .

(*He takes a step or two, which brings him to extreme left downstage, and remains in view inconspicuously, leaning comfortably against the side and watching the action . . . From right enter BILL RAND and ALEC MARTENKO. BILL is dark, thin, of medium height. ALEC is tall, blond, husky. Both are finishing dressing: ALEC is getting into his Army jacket, while BILL is still busy with his tie, fumblingly, before putting on his jacket. Both are excited.*)

BILL: I hope I made it!

ALEC: Keep your fingers crossed, Bill—for me, too.

BILL: You don't need it. If an athlete like you isn't good enough to be a pilot, the Army must be figuring on using Superman . . . (*He pulls at his tie, which he has knotted badly, bunched.*) Say, Alec, I don't know what's the matter with me all of a sudden, but this tie just won't come out right. Will you make it for me?

ALEC (*smiling*): You're a little nervous, that's all. (*Low*) Confidentially, so am I. (*He sets to work on BILL's tie.*) Hold still.

BILL (*chin up*): If only we both made it . . . It would be great to go to flying school together,

and graduate together, and maybe get assigned to the same squadron.

ALEC: We went through high school together and state college together. Maybe our luck will hold. (*He pulls the knot tight.*) There.

BILL (*squirms and pulls it loose. Gasping*): You . . . almost choked me.

ALEC (*smiling*): I'm sorry, Bill. Guess I'm still nervous . . . OH-OH, it won't be long now. Here comes the Captain.

BILL: Quick, help me with my coat. (*ALEC helps him slip into it. As BILL buttons the first button, the CAPTAIN enters at right, carrying two large record cards which he is examining. BILL and ALEC straighten to attention and salute. The CAPTAIN automatically returns the salute, glances up for a moment, and studies the cards again. The others remain stiffly at attention, though BILL tries surreptitiously—and nervously—to finish buttoning up.*)

CAPTAIN (*without looking up*): Better finish dressing, Rand. At ease, men.

BILL: Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. (*Fumblingly he buttons the rest of his jacket.*)

CAPTAIN (*looking up*): Private Martenko . . .

ALEC (*eagerly*): Yes, Captain?

CAPTAIN: You're a pretty nearly perfect physical specimen. Tests

and educational background satisfactory . . . You are recommended for aviation flight training.

ALEC: Thank you, sir! That's great, sir! Thank you, sir!

CAPTAIN (*with a smile*): I heard you the first time.

ALEC (*subsiding*): Yes, sir.

CAPTAIN. Private Rand . . .

RAND (*after a moment, tensely*): Y-yes, sir?

CAPTAIN: In your case, it was found that your vision does not meet the minimum requirements. You are not acceptable for aviation training.

BILL: But I played with Alec—Alec and I have been—(*He stops. With great disappointment.*) Yes, sir.

CAPTAIN (*after looking him over for a moment*): In the Army, Rand, every service is important. We're a great machine—but if one little cog is missing, or not functioning properly, it throws the whole works out of gear.

BILL (*low*): Yes, sir.

CAPTAIN: Every place in the Army is a place of honor. I'll admit there's little glory or glamor in many of them . . . but without the more routine services—the dull, dirty work, if you choose—there's be mighty few heroes . . . and mighty little chance for victory.

BILL: I . . . guess that's so, sir.

CAPTAIN (*examining the record card*): You were in charge of the delivery service for a department store, eh . . . (*looking up*) Rather young to be head of a department. You must have been pretty good at it.

ALEC: Excuse me, Captain . . . but he really has brains. Got terrific marks at state college. . . .

CAPTAIN (*dryly*): Thank you, Martenko . . . Rand, you'll be assigned to service with the . . . Quartermaster Corps.

BILL (*after a pause, disappointed*): The Quartermaster Corps . . .

ALEC (*under his breath, with disgust*): The Quartermaster Corps . . .

CAPTAIN (*sharply*): I haven't time now to tell you about the importance of the Quartermaster Corps. You'll discover that for yourself. I'll just say that we're eventually going to have a huge army . . . and keeping it properly supplied will call for the best brains we can muster. That's all now.

BILL and ALEC (*saluting*): Yes, sir. (*CAPTAIN returns salute and goes off right. BILL and ALEC go slowly toward left, and halt just left of center. BILL is downcast. ALEC is also depressed, on BILL's account.*)

ALEC: Tough luck, Bill.

BILL (*low*): I guess the Army knows what it's doing. Must

be all I'm good for . . . The Quartermaster Corps. . . .

ALEC: Maybe when they see what a great job you do, they'll put you into something else.

BILL: Oh, well, we can't all be heroes . . . (*turning*), so I guess that part's up to you. (*Offering his hand.*) The best of luck, Alec.

ALEC (*shaking hands*): Thanks, Bill . . . and the same to you. Between us we'll make this a man's army. So long.

BILL: So long. (*ALEC goes off right*) . . . (*To himself*): Wait till they hear about this back home . . . (*With disgust.*) The Quartermaster Corps . . . (*He goes slowly off left.*)

NARRATOR (*moving toward center*): They heard about it back home soon enough. Alec wrote his folks as soon as he got to his assigned post—Randolph Field, the big aviation training center in Texas. Bill wrote from a camp down south. Both were a long way from home. . . . I don't know how Alec's folks took it, but I imagine they reacted like most parents. The father proud and pleased, the mother proud too, but also a little worried. You know how mothers are. . . . Over at the Rand home, though, I know just what went on. I drop in pretty often. Bill's dad was more than a little disappointed, though he tried not to show it.

(*Mr. RAND enters at left, halts after two or three steps, and addresses himself earnestly to the NARRATOR.*)

MR. RAND: Without the Quartermaster Corps, you couldn't have an army . . . (*To the audience*): Without the Quartermaster Corps, you couldn't have an army. (*He looks at the NARRATOR challengingly.*)

NARRATOR (*nodding*): That's right, Mr. Rand, we certainly couldn't. (*Partially satisfied, Mr. RAND goes off left.*)

NARRATOR: That's what he'd keep saying, whenever the subject came up. As for Mrs. Rand, she felt somewhat relieved.

(*Mrs. RAND enters at left.*) MRS. RAND: Bill's a delicate boy. I'm glad he's not in dangerous work . . . (*With a worried wrinkle.*) I hope he doesn't overstrain himself lifting things. (*She nods to the NARRATOR and goes off left.*)

NARRATOR: As I said, they're like most parents . . . But it's young Johnny Rand I'd like you to know about particularly. Johnny and his big brother were pals—real pals. Bill never went to a baseball game without Johnny. And when Bill was a substitute pitcher on his college team, he'd always send Johnny tickets and train fare for week-end games. State college was only a couple of hours away by train. Never missed once

... There were all kinds of other things, too—so many of the little things that, when they exist, go to make that rather wonderful bond . . . between brother and brother.

One of these things was: Whenever Bill wrote home—from college or anywhere—he'd always send along a special letter for Johnny, in a separate envelope, separately addressed to "John Rand, Esquire." And in his first letter after being assigned to the Quartermaster Corps, Bill tried to break the news gently, even kidding a little. But to Johnny it wasn't funny. You can see for yourselves . . . Here comes Johnny from the house right now . . .

(NARRATOR quietly returns to his place at extreme left downstage. JOHNNY enters slowly from left, looking unhappy as he reads a letter out loud. He halts a little left of center.)

JOHNNY: " . . . and so now that I'm in the Quartermaster Corps—without which our Army would starve to death and freeze to death, or rather, down south here, bake to death in the open sun—I'm really beginning to appreciate the importance of supplies, and of the money to pay for them. Between us, Johnny, you and I have built up a pretty good postage stamp collection . . . "

NARRATOR (quietly, to audience): That's one more of those little things I referred to.

JOHNNY (reading on): "Now it's time to start collecting—buying war stamps. If you and the rest of the folks back home don't buy plenty of war stamps and bonds, I may be out of a job soon. No supplies, no work for the Quartermaster Corps. So don't let me down . . . Seriously, though, Johnny, my job is important, even though in it I'll never get a chance to be a hero. That part may be up to you some day, though it will be a hero of peace, I hope . . . Write me about everything you do and everything that goes on out your way. As always, your pal . . . Bill." (He folds the letter slowly and puts it back in the envelope. Then, with disgust): In the Quartermaster Corps . . . (He stands there motionless, depressed, his gaze on the ground.)

NARRATOR: To Johnny the news is bad enough in itself. But watch what happens when Alec Martenko's young brother Stanley comes out of his house—they live just across the street from each other. The girl with Stanley is his sister Mary. (Lowering his voice just a little.) She always sort of liked Johnny . . . Here they are.

(STANLEY enters from right, followed by MARY. STANLEY

is about JOHNNY's age, but bigger and domineering. MARY is about 10 or 11, and sweet. STANLEY is almost dancing for joy.)

STANLEY (rapidly, rushing to him): Johnny! Did you hear the news?

JOHNNY (spiritlessly): Hi, Stanley.

STANLEY: My brother Alec is a pilot! We just had a letter from him. Isn't that something! My brother Alec is a pilot!

JOHNNY: Not yet, he isn't. He's only been accepted for training so far. You won't know for months yet.

STANLEY (scornfully): Go on, once you're accepted, you're practically sure of becoming a pilot. They won't take you unless you're mighty good . . . I'll bet Alec comes back a hero . . . with a dozen medals . . . I'll bet he'll give me one, if I ask him—for a souvenir. (This is too much for JOHNNY. He turns away as if to leave.) Wait a minute, Johnny . . . (With a touch of superiority) I hear your brother didn't make out so well.

JOHNNY (turning back, low): No.

STANLEY (patronizingly): Not everybody is good enough to fly a plane. You can't tell, maybe Bill will get to be an officer (With a touch of contempt) in the Quartermaster Corps. Anyhow, he'll never have to face danger . . . the way a pilot has to.

JOHNNY (hotly, ready to fight): My brother could be a pilot too—and a real hero—if not for his eyes. They told him it was just his eyes that weren't good enough—otherwise he'd make a fine pilot!

STANLEY (towering over JOHNNY): All right, all right, don't try to act tough with me. My brother's going to be a flyer—and yours is going to stay nice and safe, buying food and supplies for my brother. That's how it is . . . and if you don't like it—(He pauses and glares challengingly at JOHNNY.)

MARY (stepping between them. Sharply): Stanley! You know what Pa said about fighting. If he catches you just once more—

STANLEY: Oh, all right (mockingly). The Quartermaster Corps . . . (He goes off right. JOHNNY remains glaring after him.)

MARY (gently): Don't mind what Stanley said, Johnny. He can be an awful dope when he tries.

JOHNNY: I guess . . . he said only what was so.

MARY: Any fool ought to know that the Quartermaster Corps is one of the most important parts in the whole Army! Don't they . . . (uncertainly) buy the food . . . and the uniforms . . . and the . . . beds? . . .

JOHNNY (looks at her a moment in humiliation. Then, savagely):



Yes . . . sure . . . the beds.  
(*He rushes off left.*)

MARY (*taking a step after him; sympathetically*): Johnny . . .  
(*She stops, turns, and goes sadly off right.*)

NARRATOR: As the months of 1941 passed, Alec Martenko finished his training passing with the mark of "Excellent," and became Flight Lieutenant Alexander D. Martenko, Air Corps, United States Army. Letters from him then began to arrive with postmarks from different fields in the U. S. A. . . . till one day in the fall the postmark read: "Territory of Hawaii." . . . Bill Rand, too, finished his basic training in the United States . . . Then, late in the summer of 1941, a letter from him arrived postmarked: "Philippine Commonwealth." Both boys were in service in the Pacific.

And so things stood . . . until that date no American will ever forget . . . December 7, 1941 . . . and Pearl Harbor. A few hours, after the treacherous bombs fell on Hawaii, more of the same blasted the Philippines, as a Japanese invasion expedition in overwhelming force made landings there and advanced, slowly but continually, against the American and Filipino forces on the peninsula of Bataan. (*Pause.*)

I don't have to tell you much about Bataan, I'm sure. Who can ever forget the brave stand our boys—and the fighting Filipinos—put up against the overwhelming might of the enemy? After the first Jap air attacks we had only a handful of fighting planes left, against hundreds of Japanese machines . . . a handful of tanks, against scores of Jap tanks . . . Our combined American and Filipino troops were outnumbered six to one, eight to one, even ten to one . . . But our men under General MacArthur dug in across Bataan Peninsula, in wild hill and jungle country . . . and held that line. Held it through January of 1942, though the Japs hurled masses of men and steel against us . . . Held it through February, though the Japs launched even more might against us . . . Held it through March, as the Japs frantically rushed reinforcements to the islands for one tremendous final drive . . .

Our boys on Bataan knew it was coming . . . knew too that their country, caught unprepared and off guard, would not be able to relieve them in time. But often their eyes turned toward the sea, the gateway from America . . . And they knew that our might and our fury, though mustered too late

to save them, would in the not far future, come rolling over the Pacific, and the shell-scarred flag of freedom they kept flying over Corregidor would be back there in greater glory . . . thanks to them!

(*Pause. NARRATOR takes out a big handkerchief and wipes his face before resuming.*)

I guess I got worked up a bit. Always happens to me, every time I think of the heroes of Bataan . . . Speaking of heroes reminds me . . . I'd better get back to Johnny's brother Bill, of the Quartermaster Corps, and to Flight Lieutenant Martenko, of the Air Corps . . . Both were serving in the Philippines when the Japs unleashed their war machine against us. But the Philippines are a big place—the islands cover a 3,000-mile stretch of the Pacific—and as it happened, Bill and Alec met for the first time there only a week before Pearl Harbor. They had quite a reunion—on 48 hours, leave in Manila—and arranged to meet again the month after, on Christmas leave . . . But then came December 7 . . . and the next time they met, it was in a roughly built hut on a jungle-screened hillside on Bataan . . . And by the irony of modern war—as if to show you never can tell—the flyer Alec Martenko, along with

other members of the Air Corps whose planes were destroyed in the first Japanese attacks, had to serve as an ordinary infantryman with a rifle, with no chance to be a hero in the air . . . while Johnny's brother Bill and his fellow quartermasters were among the men who had the most difficult assignments and ran the greatest risks. For the quartermasters on Bataan had a job that kept them too busy even to fire a rifle . . . the job of feeding our Army, keeping it as sheltered as possible, running up supplies of oil and gasoline for our scout cars and motorcycles. This was their job in a country mostly dominated by the enemy . . . and most of it had to be done under the enemy's fire.

The quartermasters bought up all the available rice and cattle from the Filipino farmers, as long as that was possible. Then, during the slow retreat to Bataan, they scoured the countryside for every grain of rice, every edible wild vegetable or root, every wild pig or other animal at all fit to eat. When salt gave out, they got a new supply . . . by distilling water from the ocean. At night they slipped through the Japanese lines to carry on their search for supplies, got back safely—in most cases—snatched

a few minutes' sleep . . . and started all over again. Meantime, day and night, Japanese shells came over, and Japanese bombs dropped death.

With the beginning of April, the Japanese heavy reinforcements were ready, and their "big push" began. They came over in masses, day and night, with tanks shielding them in front and bombers blasting a path for them. Our men had for months been on short rations; now they had even less to eat. For months they had gone with little sleep; now they could hardly sleep at all, as the Japanese cannon kept roaring, night and day.

As for the quartermasters, they became even busier, if that was possible . . . searching for scarce food, repairing damaged supplies, delivering what they could to our units under fire.

*(He goes slowly toward right.)*

No stage play could ever hope to show you what it was like on Bataan, those fierce first days of April. Here, just try to imagine a typical camp of a small American Army unit, on a hillside screened by jungle trees and shrubbery.

*(He goes off right, and returns in a moment with a little hay or straw from a box just offstage. He puts bits of hay down on two*

*or three spots on the right half of the stage, steps off right again, and returns with a burlap bag, which he unfolds and spreads like a sleeping-mat along right rear. Lastly, he brings in a few small rocks, which he arranges like a tiny fireplace a little left of center.)*

NARRATOR: Try to imagine a crude hut . . . shells bursting far and near, almost without a break . . . Jap planes in great numbers overhead, dropping bombs and spattering machine-gun fire . . . Japanese snipers concealed in trees in the distance, letting go every few minutes, each "ping!" a messenger of possible death or damage to an American or Filipino soldier. . .

Then night falls . . . *(As the NARRATOR continues, an exhausted American SOLDIER, in a wrinkled, ragged uniform, with torn shoes, comes in from right, takes off his helmet, and drops down on the burlap bag, where he tries to fall asleep. But he can't, and only tosses restlessly, turning from side to side, then putting his hands to his ears as if to shut out the noise of gunfire. Meantime, the NARRATOR has continued speaking.)*

NARRATOR: But the terrific shelling by Japanese guns continues, doing little damage in the darkness, but wearing our men down. *(He remains watching the SOL-*

*DIER pityingly for a few moments.)*

SOLDIER *(sitting up, despairingly)*: It's no use . . . If those Jap guns would lay off for only an hour . . . *(He rises, picks up his helmet, and drags himself off right. The NARRATOR watches him go, pityingly, then turns again to the audience.)*

NARRATOR: Day and night, American Army doctors and nurses are busy caring for the wounded . . .

*(A SOLDIER with a bandaged leg wound comes limping along from left, leaning on an Army NURSE. They cross slowly, the soldier unwillingly; he turns his head two or three times, as if trying to get back to his post. The NURSE is gentle but firm with him. She leads him off right.)*

NARRATOR: Those doctors and nurses worked miracles on Bataan . . . and even the wounded tried to keep on fighting . . . *(Pause. He turns to right.)* This is the camp to which Bill Rand is assigned. Alec Martenko is at a post only a mile away, not far from the sea . . . It's cool here this night. A Filipino soldier comes inside to warm himself at the tiny, screened fire.

*(Filipino soldier in ragged khaki shorts enters from left and squats near the stones, holding*

*out his hands over the imaginary fire.)*

NARRATOR: And here's Alec Martenko . . . Strange hour to come visiting, I must say. . . .

*(ALEC enters at right. His uniform is dirty, wrinkled, frayed. His left arm is bandaged near the shoulder. He is very tired.)*

ALEC: Hello. *(The Filipino starts to rise. He is only a private.)* Don't get up. We need all that's left of our energy for the Japs. *(The Filipino smiles wearily and stays seated. ALEC, standing, bends a little and warms his hands at the fire.)*

ALEC: Seen Sergeant Rand . . . Bill Rand, of the Quartermaster Corps?

FILIPINO *(smiling warmly at mention of the name)*: Bill Rand my pal. Went look for food . . . out there. *(He gestures to left.)*

ALEC: Is he gone long?

FILIPINO: 'Most two hours *(worried)*. Too long. *(Shakes his head.)* Too long.

ALEC *(glancing at his wrist watch)*: I can't stay more than a few minutes. *(He goes toward left, halts near the side and peers out into the darkness.)*

FILIPINO *(troubled)*: Bill went through Jap lines. Gone long . . . Don't like.

ALEC: He's your pal, is he?

FILIPINO: My pal. All quartermasters work hard. Bill, he

work most hard. Number one quartermaster.

ALEC (*fervently*): I hope he comes through. (*He glances at his wrist watch again, then peers out left—and suddenly strains his neck forward as if he sees something. But he is mistaken, evidently, for he shakes his head in disappointment, and turns.*) This is one time I particularly didn't want to miss him. (*He starts toward right.*) But I'm afraid—

(*A CAPTAIN enters from right, in a worn uniform, very tired. The FILIPINO rises. He and ALEC salute. The CAPTAIN returns it.*)

ALEC: Lieutenant Martenko of the Air Corps, sir. I was looking for a friend, Sergeant Rand.

CAPTAIN: Isn't he back yet? I don't like that. We've lost a good many quartermasters lately. Can't afford it.

ALEC: If he . . . when he gets back, sir, will you tell him I was here . . . and may not be able to see him for . . . for quite some time, sir.

CAPTAIN (*gazing at him keenly for a moment*): I'll be glad to, Lieutenant (*troubled*). But he should have been back before now. (*He gazes off left anxiously.*)

ALEC (*after a last intense stare out into the jungle*): Well . . . goodbye, sir.

(*He salutes. CAPTAIN and FILIPINO return the salute. Just as he is about to step out of sight,*

BILL *enters from left, wearily. His uniform is torn and dirty; the trousers are rolled up above the knees. He carries a small armful of vegetable roots, which he drops wearily to the ground at left of the stones.*)

CAPTAIN (*happily*): Sergeant Rand! (*ALEC turns at these words.*) Glad to see you back.

We were afraid that this time . . . (*He does not finish.*)

FILIPINO (*his face has lighted up at sight of BILL; grinning happily*): Much afraid . . .

ALEC (*going to him*): Hello, Bill. Just in time.

BILL: Hello, Alec.

FILIPINO (*picking up the roots*): I take these to wash.

BILL: Thanks, Joe. (*To CAPTAIN*) All I could find, sir, were a few roots.

CAPTAIN: They can be eaten, which is something. Well, better try to catch some sleep. (*He goes off right. The FILIPINO also goes off right, carrying the roots. BILL, worn out, drops down beside the fireplace and holds out his hands, rubbing to get the stiffness out of them.*)

BILL: What brings you over tonight, Alec?

ALEC (*after a pause*): Bill . . . have you any letters written to your folks back home?

BILL (*surprised at the question*): Yes—to pop and ma. Everybody here writes home in our

spare time . . . though we hardly expect the letters will get there. It makes us feel in touch, somehow . . . Alec, do you think the folks back home realize what we go through? Can they appreciate what this war is like?

ALEC: It's hard to, unless you're right in it. We've got to give them time, I guess. (*He glances at his wrist watch.*) If you'll let me have your letters, Bill . . . I'll try to get them through.

BILL (*amazed*): Get them through? How can you —? (*He breaks off, and looks at him intently.*) Oh . . . I think I know. You . . . I won't be seeing you for a while, will I?

ALEC (*rapidly*): That's it, Bill. Bataan is almost finished—for this time. Headquarters is trying to get out as many men as possible, under cover of darkness—to Australia, to carry on the fight from there. But we've only a few boats, and fewer planes, and headquarters is taking mostly aviation personnel. They figure we're the ones who can do the most damage to the Japs, once we get back into planes . . . If I get through, I'll mail your letters from Australia.

BILL (*after a moment, quietly*): Thanks, Alec. (*He rises and goes to upper right corner, where he stoops and comes up with an envelope, thick with paper in-*

*side.*) Here you are, Alec. There are a couple of long letters inside—it's my last envelope.

ALEC (*taking it*): If I get through, these will.

BILL: Thanks. (*He puts out his hand.*) Well, this is it—Wait, Alec. Can you give me a couple of minutes? I almost forgot—there's no letter for my brother Johnny in there . . . and he and I were such pals . . .

ALEC (*glancing at his watch*): For Johnny? Sure, go ahead. I'll have to trot part way, that's all. Go ahead.

(*BILL goes to corner again and comes back with a small piece of brown wrapping paper, wrinkled and irregularly torn.*)

BILL: This will have to do for stationery. I'll make it short. (*He sits near the fireplace. After a few moment's thought, he starts writing rapidly. Soon he is finished, and rises.*)

BILL (*As ALEC hands him the envelope and he folds and inserts the "letter" for JOHNNY*): It wouldn't be fair to send letters to the others, and not write Johnny a . . . last . . . message from Bataan.

ALEC (*trying to seem cheerful*): It certainly wouldn't.

BILL: If I . . . don't get the chance, Alec . . . and you get leave to go home . . . will you tell them about me . . . and that . . . being in the Quarter-

master Corps was—(*Quickly*) is . . . quite a job?

ALEC: Don't worry, I'll tell them . . . everything.

BILL (*putting out his hand, seemingly cheerfully*): Well then, this is . . . so long, pal.

ALEC (*taking his hand*): So long, Bill.

BILL: Till . . . the next time.

ALEC (*With a smile*): Right.

(*They look at each other in silence. Then ALEC turns and goes off right. BILL watches him for two or three moments, then turns and slowly goes off left . . . The NARRATOR walks over and picks up the stones, takes them just offstage right, and returns at once.*)

NARRATOR: Bill caught his forty winks, then was back on the job again. Alec and the others tried to run the Japanese gauntlet, heading for Australia . . . Meantime, back home in the U. S. A. . . . (*He goes to extreme left and without stepping out of sight picks up two plain chairs from just offstage. He places them in a horizontal line, a few feet apart, facing diagonally forward and slightly toward each other, but both within the left half of the stage. He gets third chair similarly, and puts it downstage left. Then he turns to the audience.*) . . . the Rand family like millions of other American families, closely followed the newspaper and radio accounts

of the Battle of Bataan. The Rand family, like thousands of other American families, had a special personal interest in Bataan . . .

Their Bill was fighting there . . .

In the Rand home, the family has finished supper. Mr. Rand heads for the living room. He tries not to show it, but if you look closely, you can see the worry in his eyes.

(*MR. RAND enters from left, newspaper in hand. He may be wearing house slippers and a simple smoking-jacket or lounging-robe. There is an unlighted pipe in his mouth. He takes the chair farthest right, and starts reading his paper. The news makes him frown. . . JOHNNY enters from left, drying his hands on a handkerchief. He is depressed.*)

MR. RAND (*without looking up*): Dishes dried, Johnny?

JOHNNY: Yes, dad.

(*Slowly he goes to the chair down left, picks up a schoolbook on it, and starts to study. But he finds it difficult to concentrate. Every little while, he looks up and tries to read the back page of the newspaper. . . MRS. RAND enters with a Red Cross bag, seats herself to left of her husband, and quietly proceeds to make bandages.*)

MRS. RAND: What's the news, Fred?

MR. RAND (*shaking his head*): It's not good. (*He reads. JOHNNY sits up and listens intently.*)

. . . "Fresh troops thrown into the battle of Bataan by the Japanese today clawed their way farther into the stubbornly defended positions of the American-Filipino forces. Beginning the fourth day of almost ceaseless pounding of the center of General Wainwright's line, the Japanese were aided by using aerial bombardments and strafing as well as intense artillery fire . . . Losses were heavy today on both sides." (*He lowers the paper and looks into space.*)

JOHNNY (*rising and walking across the room nervously*): If we could only do something to help them.

MR. RAND: I'm afraid it's too late to do much for Bataan, Johnny. We were caught unprepared. But if we don't want to see the same thing happen again and again . . . we've got a big job to do.

JOHNNY: What?

MR. RAND: You and mother and I can't be soldiers with guns . . . but we can cut down on things we use, wear and eat that are more important for our fighting men than for us. We can work harder in war production . . . in your case, study harder, to make yourself more useful to your country. We can collect scrap metal and rubber and

rags, to supply our war industries. We can buy War Savings Stamps and Bonds, to help our Government pay for the tremendous amount of equipment our fighting forces need. (*JOHNNY looks sullen.*) What's the matter, son. Don't you think that's so?

JOHNNY: I . . . I'm thinking . . . there's Bill fighting against thousands of Japs on Bataan . . . (*Bitterly*) and here people talk about things like scrap metal and War Savings Stamps . . .

MRS. RAND (*sadly but earnestly*): That's just why, Johnny. The more we at home do, the better our boys will be equipped . . . and the sooner they won't have to face such terrible odds. It means saving so many lives . . .

(*JOHNNY is unconvinced. He goes sadly back to his chair. They all remain motionless—not stiff but natural—while the NARRATOR speaks.*)

NARRATOR: A few more days dragged by, with the news worse and worse. Then this evening, after supper, the Rands are again in the living-room.

MR. RAND: Johnny.

JOHNNY: Yes, dad?

MR. RAND: Turn on the radio.

JOHNNY: Okay. (*He goes to upper left, and with a snap of the wrist turns on an imaginary radio. He remains there, waiting a few moments for the radio to warm up. Soon he turns an imaginary knob*

*slightly, and from just off stage comes a radio voice. If no microphone or loudspeaker is available, a radio illusion can be secured by having someone a little off stage speak through a small megaphone.)*

RADIO ANNOUNCER: . . . bringing you the latest news. *(Pause.)*

COMMENTATOR: Well . . . *(With a catch in his voice)* "Bataan has fallen. *(The listeners start. The news, though not unexpected, causes a shock.)*

Filipino and American troops of this war-ravaged, blood-stained peninsula have laid down their arms.

With heads bloody, but unbowed, they have yielded to the superior force and numbers of the enemy.

The world will long remember the epic struggle the Filipinos and Americans put up in the jungle fastness and along the rugged Bataan coastline. They have stood up without complaint under the constant and gruelling fire of the enemy for more than 3 months.

Besieged on land and blockaded from the sea, cut off from all sources of help, these intrepid fighters have borne all that human endurance could bear.

But what sustained them through all these months of incessant battle was a force more than physical.

It was the thought of their native land and all that it holds that is most dear to them, the thought of freedom and dignity, and pride in these most priceless of all human prerogatives."

*(Pause . . . the dispatch is finished. JOHNNY turns the radio off and slowly goes to his chair. MR. RAND rises and goes to Mrs. RAND; he puts his hand on her shoulder. She has taken out a handkerchief, and brings it to her eyes for just a moment. JOHNNY stands by his chair with clenched fists. They remain this way, motionless, as the NARRATOR speaks.)*

NARRATOR: Not long afterward came a telegram from the Secretary of War. *(He puts on a pair of glasses and unfolds a telegram taken from his pocket. The others look at him, and listen intently as he reads.)* . . . "I regret to inform you that your son, Sergeant William Rand, has been reported as missing in action . . ."

MR. RAND *(to his wife, consolingly, as the NARRATOR takes off his glasses and puts the telegram away)*: Bill's probably been taken prisoner, Mother, that's all. There were thousands of prisoners. *(She nods, rises, and with him goes off left. JOHNNY waits a moment, then follows.)*

NARRATOR: It seems Alec Martenko got through. For soon

to the Rand address came those last letters from Bill . . . for mother, for father . . . and for Johnny . . . *(JOHNNY enters from left excitedly, reading BILL's letter to himself. Finishing he remains staring at the brown paper, wide-eyed.)*

NARRATOR: The Martenkos are pretty much excited too. You remember Stanley and Mary . . . *(STANLEY and MARY rush in from right.)*

STANLEY: Gee, Johnny—we just got a long letter from Alec! He's safe in Australia!

MARY *(softly)*: He says your brother Bill was a real hero. *(She notices the paper in JOHNNY's hands.)* Did you hear from him? *(JOHNNY nods.)*

STANLEY *(respectfully)*: He's a hero, all right . . . What did he say?

JOHNNY *(After a pause, swallows hard, and begins to read slowly)*: "Dear Johnny: This may be my last letter to you for a while. Excuse the paper . . . and I'm sorry I can't send it to you in a separate envelope as usual, but this is my last envelope . . . When Alec Martenko gets home for a visit, he can tell you a lot about the fighting that wasn't in the papers. All I want to say to you is, we're doing our best, here on Bataan. But the odds against us are terrific . . . and we can't expect help from the

States in time to save our position. We can't expect help, because our country was not well enough prepared, and has to fight across the Atlantic as well as the Pacific, and hasn't yet turned out enough weapons and trained men to break through the Japanese forces. *(Pause.)* Which means there's a big job for you back home to do . . . a job for every one of you, man and woman, boy and girl. For our workers there's the job of turning out the finest planes, tanks, guns . . . turning out more of them, turning them out faster, better. For our farmers there's the job of raising more food. For everybody, and especially for fellows and girls too young to fight or do heavy work, there's the job of collecting all the scrap metal that's lying around, all the old rubber, and rags, and tin, and turning it in to be made into weapons.

*(Pause.)* "And . . . your stamp collection, Johnny . . . as I wrote before, how is it? You young fellows and girls can't fight or work in war industries yet . . . but whatever else you do, you can buy War Savings Stamps and Bonds, and keep on buying, and buying, and buying . . . and so lend your country the money it needs to pay for so many planes and ships and tanks and guns that

we soldiers and sailors and flyers will never again be caught short by our enemies. That, Johnny, is the lesson of Bataan . . . or maybe I should just say, our message from Bataan.

"So long for now . . . and the best of luck.

"Your pal . . . Bill."

(Pause. The three look thoughtful, then determined, they turn toward the audience.)

NARRATOR: I guess that's it, friends. The rest . . . is up to you.

THE END

## Star for a Day\*

A Musical Play for High School Students

### Characters

JACK DUNCAN, the high school's most popular boy.

JANE MORGAN, his girl friend.

JIM TAYLOR, Jack's best friend.

SUSAN LEE, one of the prettiest girls in the high school.

ROXANNA DAYE, one of Hollywood's glamour girls.

MISS BENNETT, Principal of the high school.

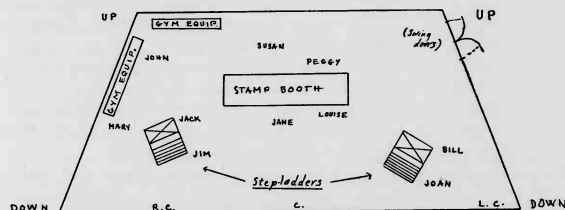
MARY, PEGGY, JOAN, and LOUISE, all enthusiastic high school workers.

JOHN and BILL, also members of the Bond Sale Committee.

Others may be added, depending on the size of stage.

PLACE: A corner of the high school gymnasium.

TIME: The present.



### Scene I

(A portion of the high school gym. There is some gymnastic equipment pushed against the right wall of the stage, and also the rear wall. Up left, is a double swinging door. In center, is a Bond Booth, being decorated for the Rally. On the Booth is a picture of the President,

and another of Roxanna Daye, the movie star who is coming here to aid the sale of Bonds. At left center, we find a step-ladder, and right center, another. The committee of girls and boys are busy decorating the Booth and gym with red, white, and blue.

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*As the curtain opens . . . we hear:*

ALL (*singing to the tune of On the Road to Mandalay*):

We're the High School Senior  
Class . . . (*pointing to themselves*)

And we're busy as can be,  
For we ALL are getting ready,  
To ASSIST democracy (*all salute*).

We will have a big BOND  
sale (*point to booth and picture of ROXANNA*)

And our guest is on the way;  
Let the cheers ring out like  
thunder

For our own Roxanna Daye!  
(*right hands in air*).

JIM (*standing at foot of ladder R. C. handing JACK some crepe paper, speaks excitedly*): I can hardly believe it, a REAL movie star, right here in our own school!

JANE (*rises from her knees, crosses R. C. to JIM*) Oh, Jim, you'd think she was coming to see you, personally. You, boys, certainly are getting excited over this rally . . . After all, you shouldn't forget its real purpose.

JACK (*calling from top of ladder*): Ah . . . Ha . . . You're jealous . . . I knew it!

JANE (*trying to disguise her feelings*): Don't be silly! It's wonderful the way the movie stars are helping these Bond Sales,

and we are just lucky to have one here with us. (*Walks back to booth.*)

JACK: Don't try to hide your feelings . . . You ARE jealous . . . now aren't you?

JANE (*pirots around toward JACK*): Well . . . if you insist . . . I Am! But remember (*shaking her finger at him*), we are having her here for ONE purpose, and that is to make D. H. S. come out on top, in bond sales. Now remember that, and get busy and tack this crepe paper up. (*Crosses to step-ladder at R. C. and hands him the paper.*)

JACK: Certainly, but . . . (*motions to the other boys to join in the song*).

ALL BOYS (*singing to the tune of smiles*):

There are GIRLS, who show  
a dimple (*point to their cheeks*),

There are GIRLS, with sparkling eyes (*point to eyes*),

There are GIRLS, with manners sweet and simple,

And their ways both please us, and surprise!

There are GIRLS that fit most all descriptions,

In whatever high school, you may be,

But the GIRL, who makes my heart pit patter (*hands to hearts*).

Is Roxanna, the GIRL for me! (*indicate themselves*).

SUSAN (*who has been working up right, comes to center, hops up on booth and speaks sarcastically*): Very romantic . . . very, but do you think for one moment, that Roxanna Daye is even going to Look at you?

JACK (*confidently*): Look at me? (*Climbs down ladder quickly, crosses to L. C.*). Yes, my precious green-eyed Sue, I think she might, and I'll even make a BET, with you . . . After the rally, I bet she'll even DANCE with me!

JANE (*laughing*): Ha, ha, the "Great Waltzer," . . . you make me laugh! I'll take you up on that bet. I'll say she won't dance with You, or any of these High School Romeos. I'll bet five 10-cent War Stamps . . . are you game?

JACK: Never let it be said, a Duncan couldn't take a challenge! Let's shake on it. (*They do.*)

MARY: You're really taking this seriously, aren't you?

JIM: We fellows must show our superiority somehow. I think Roxanna might take a twirl with Jack, and I'm with him.

ALL GIRLS (*singing to tune of K-K-K-Katy*):

F-F-F-Fellows, F-F-F-Fellows, you're the only Romeos

That we adore (*hands on heart*),

But when the STARLETS, visit from stage sets,  
You politely show us to the open door (*point to door*).

F-F-F-Fellows, F-F-F-Fellows, can't you see how you Have broken our poor hearts? But we'll be waiting, anticipating,  
Until this certain lovely movie star departs! (*points to Roxanna's picture*).

JOHN: It's nice to know you're our friends . . . but, we've an important BET to discuss.

LOUISE: There's nothing to discuss . . . If Roxanna dances with Jack . . . you boys, WIN . . . And if she doesn't . . . We WIN . . . Very simple!

MARY: Very . . . Now when does glamour girl show up?

BILL (*on other ladder, stops decorating, and sits on top*): Well, she's driving down in her own car, and she'll be here for her press conference at 11. At 12:30, she is due at the Kiwanis for luncheon . . . and then, HERE, at 2 o'clock! Time can't go fast enough for me.

JANE: You must have learned that schedule by heart, the way you reel it off (*putting on an act*). Ooooh . . . to be a movie star!

JACK: Would that you were.

JANE: Don't be nasty. . . . You'll be crawling back in a day or so.

JIM: Maybe she's right, Jack, but now we've got to hurry and get this booth finished 'cause . . .  
ALL (*sing to the tune of Mandalay*):

We will have a great big Bond Sale!

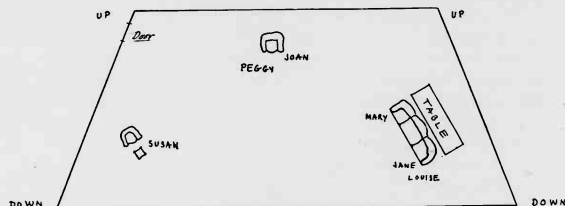
And our guest is on the way—  
Let the cheers ring out like thunder

For our own Roxanna Daye!

(*or alternately, to the tune of Anchors Aweigh*.)

We're selling Bonds, today,  
We'll be on top!  
We'll make our High School shine,  
And show old Hitler, we're the kind,  
Who must have our liberty,  
We'll never fail!  
We'll fight with all our might,  
AND BONDS, AND STAMPS, are HERE, today, for SALE!

CURTAIN



## Scene II

Same, half an hour later.

(*Everything is ready for the Bond Rally. Step-ladders have been removed. The girls are lounging near the decorated booth and on the chairs arranged for the committee. Most of them are busy knitting.*)

MARY (*excitedly*): Well, we've only an hour now. The gym is all ready and I'm so excited!

JOAN: While the boys are out putting up the posters, I am glad to have a chance to knit.

PEGGY: Me, too (*holding her knitting up*). Only I hope I can get to the sleeve, in this sweater, before the crowd starts coming.

JOAN: You're getting along fine, Peggy. Imagine Us, sitting around the gym KNITTING! I used to think knitting was for grandmothers.

JANE: Grandmothers or granddaughters. I feel as if I am doing something useful for a change.

SUSAN: Isn't it the truth? And

I'm getting a big kick out of it, aren't you?

LOUISE: I sure am . . . you know . . . (*Just then there is a knock at the door and it opens.*)

MISS BENNETT (*enters, and speaks in a disturbed manner*): Girls . . . oh, here you are, I've been looking for you. Something has just come up . . . (*Pauses*) but my . . . I thought I'd find you all resting (*forgetting her troubles for the moment*). Aren't you tired from your decorating?

JANE: Oh, no . . . we're the younger generation, and we have a job to do . . . in fact, we're very much awake, cause we're . . .

ALL GIRLS (*sing to tune of Sleepy Time Gal*):

We're stay-awake gals! (*hold eyes open*),

Doing all we can for our boys,  
Stay-awake gals

Bringing to them some little joys.

The sweaters we knit (*show them to audience*)

May all be tight,

But each little stitch, we make,

We hope will help you to fight.

The time is short, and we are waiting (*for*),

We're wide-awake gals,  
And when this World War is thru'

We stay-awake gals will all be singing to you.

We hope that Hitler will hang (*gesture to show hanging*),  
And all the rest of his gang,  
That's why we're stay-at-home, work-at-home-knit-at-home,

Wide-awake gals!

MISS BENNETT: That's an excellent spirit . . . You are truly ALL-AMERICAN girls! You almost made me forget WHY I came here . . . I've some very disturbing news! The Kiwanis just phoned saying Roxanna Daye did NOT arrive for their luncheon!

GIRLS (*flabbergasted*): WHAT? Didn't arrive? Oh!!!

(*Some of the girls jump up at the news, others limply fall back in their chairs. There are all sorts of gasps and exclamations . . .*)

MISS BENNETT (*a little more encouragingly*): Perhaps she'll be here though. We've had no notice to the contrary. I hope she didn't have an accident . . . but in the meantime, the classes are assembling, and their parents, too.

MARY (*in a worried tone of voice*): Oh, dear, WHAT WILL WE DO? Let's all think. (*She walks down left*) (*There is a moment's silence.*)

SUSAN (*brilliantly*): Oh, Miss Bennett, I have an idea. I hope you won't object. Would you



allow me to dress up as Roxanna? I have a dress copied from one of hers . . . and I could wear mother's hat, with a flowing veil.

MISS BENNETT (*definitely*): Oh, no . . . no . . . I couldn't hear of it. It would be deceiving the people . . . No, I'm afraid not.

LOUISE (*crosses to Miss BENNETT, and begs*): Oh, PLEASE, Miss Bennett, it's for a good cause . . . and if Roxanna, does show up, we can say it was planned as a novel way of introducing her . . . PLEASE say YES!

MISS BENNETT (*hesitantly*): I really shouldn't be drawn into this conspiracy, but I hate disappointing all the others. (*Pause.*) All right, I'll say YES and just hope everything will work out.

JOAN: You're a dear, Miss Bennett . . . and if we get caught, we won't involve you.

MISS BENNETT (*starting to door*): Well, good luck, girls . . . and now I'll be on my way. (To SUSAN) Susan, you come to my office, as soon as you are dressed, and I'll take you to the gym and introduce you.

MARY (*crosses to SUSAN, and begins to give her a gentle push toward the door*): And you hurry, Susan. You haven't too much time . . . Go home and dress. Oh, this is really going to be fun!

MISS BENNETT (*still a bit per-*

*turbed*): I hope you are right! See you girls later. (*Exits.*)

SUSAN (*at door*): I'm on my way . . . and mother's new bonnet with the lacy veil will just do the trick.

JANE (*joins SUSAN at the door, and says mysteriously*): Not so fast, Susan, I've been thinking while all this has been going on; You can do Two magical TRICKS, today. Remember the BET?

SUSAN: Sure. (*Pauses.*) But what do you mean?

JANE: Simply this . . . REFUSE to dance with Jack, after the rally, and hokus, pokus, FIVE War Stamps will be sold.

SUSAN (*with a twinkle in her eye*): I get you, and never let it be said, I'd be a traitor to my country. Well, I'm on my way (*next is spoken dramatically*) and when I return, I'll be dripping glamour!

GIRLS (*wave*): So-long, Susan. (*All turn to a picture of Roxanna, which is one of the many on the wall.*)

GIRLS (*sing, to the tune of Reuben, Reuben, I've been thinking*):

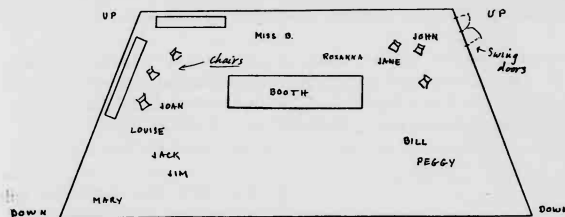
Roxanne, Roxanne, Please forgive us

For impersonating you.

We just want to sell more War Bonds,

Helping our Red, White, and Blue!

CURTAIN



### Scene III

(Same stage set.)

(*The swinging doors up left are opened. At rise we find some of the committee seated; others are in groups down right and left center. All is in readiness for the Big Sale.*)

JACK: You know, I'm getting nervous about this whole affair . . . wish she would get here, and get . . .

JIM (*interrupting*): She will . . . (*looking off left stage.*) I think I see Miss Bennett coming with her now.

(*MISS BENNETT enters. Close by her is Susan dressed as Roxanna. They enter from the open doors, up left, and cross stage, and go behind the booth.*)

MISS BENNETT: Students, and friends . . . We are so pleased to have with us this charming young lady, who has so kindly agreed to help us raise our quota, in the Bond Sale. It's a privilege to present, Miss Roxanna Daye, one of Hollywood's brightest stars!

JIM (*turning to JACK and speaking in a loud whisper*): Gee, she's REALLY Beautiful . . . Isn't she?

JACK (*facing JIM*): Guess so, but how can you see? That veil covers her whole face.

JIM: Oh, I'm sure she'll raise it now. She's getting ready to speak.

SUSAN (*dressed as Roxanna and speaking in a very affected manner*): It's so nice being here with you folks, and I'm sure you all realize how important it is to Uncle Sam to have War Bonds in every home. Buy as many as you can! I'm not going to say much more, but instead, if you will allow me . . . I shall sing a song, to start this sale off right . . . (*sings to tune of Alexander's Rag Time Band*):

Come on along; and join the throng,

War Bonds are here for sale! Don't hesitate . . . You can't be late.

These Bonds will tell the tale.

Uncle Sammy needs the money,

And you can't afford to wait, Dig down deep, and forget about your date.

Come on, and GIVE, all that you can! Every man!

Come on along, Come on along,

Give us a helping hand!

Not so fast! They're going to last.

It's for the Freedom of our land.

And if you want to see the Axis and Japs knocked out dizzy,

Come on along, come on along, and BUY a Great Big U. S. Bond!

(All clap.)

SUSAN (taking a slight bow): Thank you very much, folks. Now it is up to you. Who'll buy the first?

JOHN (crosses to booth, takes money from pocket): I will! Here's my \$18.75! I've been saving my allowance for weeks.

JACK (to JIM, and facing audience): Say, Jim, I wonder why she didn't raise that veil. I was sure she would when she started to sing.

JIM (trying to pass it off lightly): I can't understand it, unless it's a new Hollywood fad.

MARY (walking over to booth): I'll take one too. This is my birthday money, and I think I'm

buying a grand present for myself.

ANY PARENT (coming on stage, from the audience): I'll take four \$25 bonds. One for each of my children.

SUSAN: Oh, folks, you are wonderful! Now the rest of you, just step up to the booth, and buy as many as you want. I know the young people would like to dance though there is not much room here for dancing. But think you'll find lots of space off here, to my left. So come on, all . . . Swing, and sway, and Buy Bonds for the U. S. A.

(Now the music is heard, and several boys and girls start to dance out through the swinging doors. A few people, selected beforehand, should come up from the audience to buy bonds, otherwise, the purchasers stroll in from the swinging doors; there should always be someone at the booth, but not too much commotion. We also see the dancers gliding past the open doors, now and then. The music stops at intervals, and at all times is played very softly.)

JIM (nudging JACK): Now's your chance Jack . . . Go ahead, and ask her. She's coming from behind the booth.

JACK (nervously): Gosh, I feel like my first day in dancing school . . . but here goes! (Crosses to L. C. where Roxanna is standing.)

MARY (in a loud whisper): We'll be watching, Don Juan. May the fates be against you!

JACK (a little embarrassed): Hello, Miss Daye. A-hem . . . Do . . . you . . . Would you . . . ?

SUSAN (in a very superior manner): Yes?

JACK (blurts it out): Would you DANCE with me?

SUSAN (condescendingly): Why, how PERFECTLY SWEET . . . you seem to be a charming boy (shakes her head) but I think I'd better NOT. I'm going to stick near the booth.

JACK: You mean you . . . Won't! (quite flabbergasted at the refusal).

SUSAN (overly-sweet): I'm afraid not. Thank you just the same.

JACK (almost overcome, walks slowly and sadly down left center): GEE WHIZZ!

MARY (crossing to JACK): I didn't mean to eavesdrop . . . But aren't you the big, handsome waltzer, we've heard so much about?

JIM (joining JACK and MARY) (to MARY): Oh, run along. Can't you see Jack's upset?

MARY (flippantly): Too bad, too bad. But I'm sure the five War Stamps he owes Jane will do more good, anyway. I must run over now, and tell Jane. (Exits, through swinging doors.)

JIM: Gee, Jack, I'm sorry . . . but don't take it so hard. There are other pretty girls here.

JACK: I don't mean to sulk, but I was sure she'd say "Yes" . . .

You know, Jim, there's something funny about this. She said "No", without even thinking.

JIM: Well, they say movie actresses are queer. But forget about it (looks to the right). I see a pretty girl over there. . . . I'm going over.

JACK: Guess you are right. I'll find someone else, too . . . but I do hate losing that BET. (JIM walks over to the right of stage, and swings off stage with his girl friend. JACK looks around a bit, and crosses to Roxanna who has strolled in unnoticed, and taken a seat up left.) Say, you must be new around here . . . will you dance?

ROXANNA: I'd be delighted. (They take a few turns.) Looks like the rally is quite a success.

JACK: Yes, it is. (The music has stopped, and they stand facing each other.) Say, are you a visitor here?

ROXANNA: Well, not exactly. Miss Daye is attractive, isn't she? (Looking to SUSAN.)

JACK (disgustedly): Is she? If she would lift that veil . . . maybe I could tell . . .

ROXANNA: You talk as if you don't CARE much for her . . .

JACK: Oh, I guess she's all right, but I had a bet with one of the girls. I said Roxanna Daye would dance with me . . . and

I want you to know she said  
No, but emphatically.

ROXANNA (*holding back her laughter*): Well, don't be so glum about it.

JACK (*more smilingly*): I'm sorry to bore you. . . . You know . . . you look awfully familiar . . . haven't I seen you at a sorority dance, or some place? Gosh! Say . . . I KNOW who you are . . . but you couldn't be!!!

ROXANNA: Yes, I am. You see I was delayed in getting here. Come over in this corner, and I'll tell you about it. (*She sings to the tune of Yankee Doodle.*)

My car ran out of gas, you see,  
I had to take a trolley;

I guess perhaps it's just as well  
For driving now is folly.

I've half a mind to sell my car  
And then to put the proceeds

Along with what I save on gas  
In bonds and stamps for war needs.

JACK: You HONESTLY RAN out of gas?

STRANGER: Yes, I guess I shouldn't have gone to that party last night. I should have saved my gas for today's journey, but I was sure I'd have enough.

JACK (*anxiously*): But WHAT are you going to do?

STRANGER: I haven't had much time to think about it. But you are the only one who has recognized me, so I think I'll forget about the whole thing.

JACK: But you CAN'T do that. What about my BET?

STRANGER: Oh, yes, the bet! Well, I'll tell you. . . . We'll straighten that out. . . . But please don't tell anyone who I am, because I feel it's all my fault. I should have been here on time. Whoever is impersonating me, must have realized the Bond Sale, was more important than having these folks go back home. Now . . . you run over and get my double . . . and then I shall leave as quietly as I came in.

JACK: All right, you stay here. . . . I'll get her. (*Crosses to SUSAN and speaks in a very flippant manner.*) Say, Miss Daye . . . won't you change your mind about that dance?

SUSAN (*still acting*): No, I'm afraid not. . . . You see. . . .

JACK (*interrupting*): I see. . . . but do YOU? Look over in that corner. . . . Recognize anyone?

SUSAN (*dropping her pose, then pleadingly*): Oh, Jack, you can't give me away. . . . I had to do it! Take me to her, I'll explain everything. (*They cross to where the STRANGER is seated.*)

ROXANNA (*kindly*): Don't be frightened. I'm not going to tell.

SUSAN (*most humbly*): Please forgive me, Miss Daye, but when you didn't arrive. . . . we were desperate, and we wanted so much to get our quota.

ROXANNA: You needn't make excuses. . . . I think you were right, and I'm planning to slip out without further complications. There's just one thing before I go. . . . I want YOU to promise to dance with this young man. You know, I would have (*gives JACK a warm smile*) and just to settle the BET. . . . COULD you buy a few extra stamps for me?

SUSAN (*so willing to oblige*): Of course, I could. . . . I'll do anything you ask, I just don't want to get caught.

ROXANNA: You won't (*rises*) and I do hope it has been worth the risk. I hope, too, you've gone over the top on your Bond Sale. Now. . . . I'll slip out this way. . . . Good-bye. . . . (*Exits through swinging doors.*)

SUSAN: Good-bye, Miss Daye. . . . You've been wonderful about the whole thing. I'll never stop singing your praises.

JACK: And now (*turning to SUSAN*), Miss Daye, may I have the pleasure of dancing with your royal highness?

SUSAN De-light-ed ! ! ! !

(*They are about to dance, when the boys of the cast enter, and start to sing. The girls follow in immediately, and the entire*

*cast sings this last song. The tune is "Here's a How-de-do" taken from Gilbert and Sullivan's "Mikado." This music can be found in "Treasury of Gilbert and Sullivan." Edited by Deems Taylor. Publishers, Simon and Schuster 1941.*)

ALL (boys):

We have won the bet. . . .  
We're not finished yet,  
We must settle old man Hitler  
Make him look a great deal  
"littler,"  
Must have plans all set,  
Here's what we will do,  
Here's what we will do!

ALL SINGING:

Hitler is a fiend,  
He is mighty mean,  
Hirohito is a-flying,  
Mussolini, is a-spying,  
Let's BREAK up this scene!  
Some triumvirate,  
Some triumvirate!

Here's what we will do,  
Here's what we will do,  
Organize a special army,  
Of our entire student body,  
To protect our rights,  
We'll show Hitler sights,  
We're the kind who fight!

With our soldiers, and our  
sailors,  
We'll defend our liberty,  
And the Axis better run,  
If light of day, they want to  
see,

For they can't win the war,  
And we will give them more!

We've a lot to do today,  
We must save the U. S. A.  
Stamps and Bonds will lead  
the way,  
Our land is here to stay!  
Here's what we can do!  
Here's what we can do!

For we're making history,  
With a glorious victory,  
Here's to OUR LAND,  
It will ALWAYS STAND!

## CURTAIN

### Properties

Picture of a movie star.  
A table, with two pieces of wood  
tacked on to form a booth.  
A flag.  
Two step-ladders.  
Picture of President.  
Swinging doors.

Red, white, and blue decorations.  
A hammer.  
Gymnastic "horse" or any gym  
equipment, easily handled.  
Six straight-back chairs.  
Movie stars' pictures.  
Knitting.  
Bonds and Stamps.  
Stage money.  
Sound effect.  
Victrola music (off stage).

### Costumes

All students wear sport clothes;  
suggest sweaters and skirts for  
girls, and trousers and sport  
shirts for boys.  
Miss Bennett, a longer dress; a  
mature-looking outfit, prefer-  
ably dark. She may wear horn-  
rimmed "spectacles" too.  
Susan, a "dressy" dress and a hat  
with a lacy flowing veil.  
Roxanna, a sport outfit, similar to  
the students, which makes her  
less conspicuous.

# We Will Do Our Share\*

## A War Savings Play for Elementary Schools

### Characters

TOMMIE.	DIME.	2ND NICKEL.	ANNOUNCER'S
PENNY.	QUARTER.	CHILDREN.	VOICE.
NICKEL.	HALF DOLLAR.	MOTHER'S	
FOUR PENNIES.	BANK ROLL.	VOICE.	

TIME: *The present. A Saturday evening.*

SCENE: *A boy's room, typically furnished. On the walls are pennants, sport pictures and any odd trophies such as a boy might treasure. At right a door leads into the hall, and in the back wall another door opens into a closet. There is a large, low-silled window in the left wall down stage. A bed is placed at left with the headboard against the back wall. (Note: The bed has no footboard, and the covers hang to the floor.) There is a table with a small radio upon it at right of the bed. Near the bed also is a small floor lamp. A chest of drawers and a chair or two complete the furnishings.*

AT RISE: Tommie, a boy of seven or eight, dressed in pajamas, is in bed, reading. He is yawning as though getting very sleepy, but he has the radio turned on and you hear some soft music. (The music can come from a record backstage.)

MOTHER'S VOICE (from right, as though from hall): Tommie, it's late. You'd better go to sleep now, and don't forget to turn off your radio.

TOMMIE (looking right. Calling): I won't, Mom. Good night.

MOTHER'S VOICE: Good night, Tommie. (TOMMIE puts his book on the table and yawns again. Just then the music from the radio stops and you hear an announcer's voice.)

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE (off. As though from radio): Buy United States War Bonds and Stamps. Uncle Sam needs money!

(TOMMIE reaches over sleepily and turns the radio off, then turns off the floor lamp and sinks down on his pillow. Note: When TOMMIE turns the lamp off, the bright white light fades, but there must still be enough illumination to plainly see the characters and actions of the play.)

A Penny crawls out from under the bed. Penny is a boy

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wearing a copper-colored costume. On the front and back of the costume are cardboard disks about 2 feet in diameter. If possible, these disks should be joined by strips of cardboard at the sides to give the effect of a solid coin. (*Note: All the coin characters' costumes can be similar in construction except that they will vary in color, size, and design.*) This Penny happens to be a Lincoln Penny, and his front shows Lincoln, and his back "One Cent" in large letters. In other words, a replica of a Lincoln Penny. As the Penny is crawling out from the bed, the door of the closet opens and a Nickel appears. The Nickel is dressed in a dull gray costume with an Indian head on his front and a buffalo on his back.

PENNY (*Looking at NICKEL*): Did you hear what they said over the radio?

NICKEL: Sure I did. Uncle Sam needs money.

PENNY (*throwing out his chest*): Well, I'm money!

NICKEL (*coming center and looking at PENNY scornfully*): Humph you're only a penny!

PENNY (*shaking finger at NICKEL and standing very straight*):

I may be only a penny  
But don't you high-hat me;  
I'm very important financially,

As you will no doubt see.

NICKEL: How could a penny be important? You're just a poor little copper cent.

PENNY: Well, who are you?

NICKEL: I'm a nickel—can't you see? (*turns his back to PENNY, showing the printed "5 cents."*)

And I'm worth five of you;  
I can buy candy or peppermints,  
Or a package of gum to chew!

PENNY: Well, what's so wonderful about that? I wish somebody would give me to Uncle Sam to help win the war. Where'd you come from, Nickel?

NICKEL: Out of the closet. I was in Tommie's pants pocket. I guess he's going to buy an ice cream cone with me tomorrow.

PENNY: Well, he let me roll under his bed last week and forgot all about me. And I could help Uncle Sam.

NICKEL: No you couldn't. You can't buy any war stamps with a penny.

PENNY: Just the same, NICKEL, there must be some way a penny can help.

NICKEL: Why a dime told me last week—I was in somebody's pocket with him—that even I wasn't enough to buy a War Stamp with—and I'm worth five times as much as you are.

PENNY: Yes; but wait a minute—I just thought of something—there are four more pennies in a cup

on the kitchen shelf—(*he goes to door right*).

NICKEL: What are you going to do?

PENNY: Get them up here. (*Calling.*) Oh, Pennies—oh, Pennies in the kitchen! Come on up here a minute! Uncle Sam needs you! (*Turning.*) You just wait and see, Nickel, what'll happen now. (*Four more pennies come skipping in. They are all dressed in a similar fashion to 1st PENNY. Three are LINCOLN PENNIES and one is the old-fashioned INDIAN PENNY.*)

FOUR PENNIES (*in unison, chanting*):

Four little pennies, here we are,  
We jumped right out of the cup;  
Four little pennies all in a row—  
We heard you call and came up.

PENNY (*skipping over and standing beside them; triumphantly*):

Five little pennies all in a row—  
All in a row, all in a row;  
Now do you see what happens to us?  
How we grow and grow and grow!

NICKEL (*staring at them*): Why—Why—

PENNY: Now, we're worth just as

much as you are, Nickel! What do you think of that?

NICKEL: Why—why, so you are—and listen, Penny, do you know what? With me—and all of you, why Tommie could buy a War Stamp! We make ten cents!

PENNY (*looking around at all of them*): Why, of course we do. That's it—that's it—Tommie's got to save us up. That's how we can help Uncle Sam!

FOUR PENNIES (*chanting*): Save us up! Save us up! Save us, everyone!

NICKEL: Do you know what I think we ought to do? We ought to call a meeting of all the money in this house.

PENNY: That's a good idea. See how many of us can go for war stamps. You call 'em, Nickel—they'll pay more attention to you than they will to me.

NICKEL (*standing in center, putting his hand to his head and shutting his eyes as though concentrating. Calling*):

Oh, money, money, money—  
Come out wherever you are;  
Quarters and dimes and dollars,

Whether you're near or far!  
Oh, come out, come out,  
come out—

Pennies and nickels, too;  
Uncle Sam is calling us  
To help our country through!

(A DIME comes running in. DIME is played by a small girl, dressed in silver. She has the head of Liberty with winged cap on front and the fasces entwined with an olive branch on back.)

DIME:

I'm a dime—from Tommie's bank—

I heard you calling me;  
And pray, what is it that you want?

I came right up to see.

NICKEL: We're calling a meeting of all the money in the house!

DIME (haughtily): You're calling a meeting? But you're a nickel. I don't usually associate with nickels—and I do believe—aren't those pennies?

FOUR PENNIES: Of course we're pennies.

DIME: But after all, I'm made of silver and—

PENNY: Well, I'm just a penny—and proud of it. If Tommie saves enough of me, he can buy lots of war stamps.

DIME: War Stamps?

NICKEL: Sure—and Tommie can buy a War Stamp with you already, right the way you are. That's what the smallest stamp costs—a dime.

DIME: You mean I could help Uncle Sam if Tommie used me for a War Stamp?

FOUR PENNIES: Sure you could—sure you could!

DIME: I'd like that. I got awfully tired of being in that old piggy bank. He just put me in the slit one day and there I was.

PENNY: Yes—and you'll never be worth any more in the piggy bank. If Tommie would loan us all to Uncle Sam, we'd draw interest. In ten years, we'll be worth lots more than we are now!

(A QUARTER comes running in right. QUARTER is played by a boy dressed in bright silver with the head of Washington on his front and an eagle on his back.)

QUARTER:

I'm a quarter from Grandfather's pocket—

Worth a fourth of a dollar, you know—

And he's going to give me to Tommie,  
To take in a picture show!

NICKEL: But he can't do that, Quarter.

PENNY: No—listen, Quarter, we're having a meeting of all the money in the house—

DIME: And we want to tell you—  
QUARTER: You can't tell me anything. Listen here, Small Change—

DIME (mad): Who are you calling Small Change?

QUARTER: Humph, you're only a dime.

DIME: But I'm enough to buy a war stamp for Uncle Sam!

QUARTER: If you can buy one, I

can buy a bigger one. I'm a lot of money!

(A HALF DOLLAR comes in just as QUARTER says his last speech. HALF DOLLAR is played by a girl, bigger than QUARTER. She is also dressed in silver with a figure of Liberty draped in a flag on her front and an eagle with wings raised grasping a pine branch on her back.)

HALF DOLLAR (Scornfully to QUARTER as she comes in): Oh, you're not so much!

DIME (eyes big): Gee, are you—are you—

HALF DOLLAR (tossing her head proudly):

Yes; I'm a half dollar, fifty cents,

From Mother's pocketbook;

If you want to see a piece of change,

Now's your chance to look!

(HALF DOLLAR holds herself proudly and struts about. QUARTER looks crestfallen and the others stare.)

PENNY: My goodness, you are a lot of money!

FOUR PENNIES (chanting): A lot of money—a lot of money!

HALF DOLLAR: Of course I am, but would you believe it?—Mother was scornful of me. She said: "Fifty cents—that's all I've got left over from the house keeping money."

NICKEL: But you'll buy a fifty-cent war stamp.

HALF DOLLAR: I know. That's what Mother's going to use me for.

DIME: Good! Then you're all taken care of. We're trying to find out how many of us can go for war stamps.

PENNY (staring at HALF DOLLAR): I—I feel awfully insignificant since I've seen Half Dollar. Why, she's worth fifty times as much as I am.

FOUR PENNIES (shaking their heads and chanting): Fifty times—fifty times!

NICKEL: Yes; but look, Pennies, it isn't the amount—it's if we're saved up regularly—all of us—that's what's important. Even pennies and nickels and dimes count up fast!

(A fat BANK ROLL comes in right. This character is played by a boy. He wears a green costume and around him are wrapped four five-dollar bills, a ten-dollar bill, and ten one-dollar bills. These bills are large, about two feet wide and proportionately long, and can be made of white wrapping paper with appropriately colored markings and pictures. They are held in place by a black belt which might look like a rubber band. BANK ROLL puffs a little as he comes in. All the other characters stare at him in amazement, their eyes bulging.)

NICKEL (pointing): Look—Look! DIME: Oh, my goodness!

QUARTER: Did you ever see so much money in all your life?

PENNY: So much money—it takes my breath away.

FOUR PENNIES: It takes our breath away—that's what we all say!

HALF DOLLAR: Who—who are you, anyway?

BANK ROLL:

I'm Dad's bank roll—

I look like this on Saturday night,

But by the middle of the week—

I'll look a sight!

HALF DOLLAR: What do you mean? You look wonderful.

QUARTER: I'll say you do—all padded up with big bills!

DIME: You're such a nice fat bank roll!

BANK ROLL: Oh, sure, I look all right now, but I don't last long. I just melt away.

PENNY: Melt away?

BANK ROLL: Well, not exactly melt maybe, but I shrink. I get smaller and smaller and smaller—*(sadly)* until there's—well, just nothing left of me.

NICKEL: My goodness!

PENNY: Nothing left of you at all?

BANK ROLL *(shaking his head sadly. Slowly)*: Nothing—at all.

DIME: Dear me.

BANK ROLL *(wiping a tear away)*:

Yes; it is sad, isn't it? Look, I'll show you what happens.

*(He takes off his belt and hangs it over the back of a chair. Then he unwinds a ten dollar bill from his costume and spreads it on the floor in front of him, holding the remaining ones in place with one hand.) This goes for rent—(He pulls off two fives and spreads them on top of the ten.) This goes for food.*

QUARTER: Good gracious, he's getting smaller already.

BANK ROLL: You haven't seen anything yet! *(He pulls off another five.)* Household bills. You know—light, heat, telephone, etc.

HALF DOLLAR: We can't keep up with you. Not so fast!

BANK ROLL: But that's the way I go—fast. *(He peels off another five.)* This is for bills too—insurance, doctor, dentist—

PENNY: Look how he's shrinking—there's hardly anything left of him!

BANK ROLL *(peeling off five ones)*: Unfortunately, Tommie needs new shoes this week and more schoolbooks, so that takes care of these five singles. So—*(He peels off another dollar. There are still four one-dollar bills hanging on his waist, though)*—that leaves this dollar. Dad will use this for his lunches if he doesn't have to spend it for something else. *(He looks at it sadly.)* The last dollar!

DIME: No, it isn't—you've still got four more!

BANK ROLL *(looking down at himself)*: Oh sure—but those are for War Stamps. Dad wouldn't touch those dollars for anything else. *(Proudly.)* Ten percent of me goes for War Stamps every week to help Uncle Sam.

NICKEL: It does?

BANK ROLL: Of course. Dad's bought several bonds already.

PENNY: That's wonderful. Then we don't have to sell you on our idea.

BANK ROLL: What idea? Now wait a minute. *(He picks up his bills from the floor and stands them on their sides, straightening them.)* I'm going to put myself together again. I might as well look prosperous while I can—it won't last long. *(Keeping all his bills together, he catches them under one arm and starts twisting around, rolling them onto himself as he does it. When they are in place, he picks up his belt and puts it on again.)* There, that's better. All right now, Penny, what's this great idea?

PENNY: Why, sir, we want Tommie to save us regularly and buy War Stamps with us—even small change like us pennies—why we can grow!

FOUR PENNIES: Sure, we can grow—we'll have you know!

NICKEL: And nickels, they count. I'm the only one here, but if there were another—why, two

nickels will buy a War Stamp! *(Another nickel runs in, this time a JEFFERSON NICKEL.)*

2ND NICKEL *(running in)*: Here I am—another nickel!

NICKEL: Hey, where were you? We called this meeting a long time ago!

2ND NICKEL:

I got lost in the great big chest,

The one out in the hall;

And I puffed and blowed till I got out—

After I heard you call!

NICKEL: Well, you're here now, anyway—we need everyone—we've got to tell Tommie about our idea!

PENNY: Tommie can tell all the children to buy War Stamps.

DIME: Tommie can help Uncle Sam. Uncle Sam needs money! *(There is a stir from the bed and TOMMIE half sits up in bed, rubbing his eyes.)*

TOMMIE *(still half asleep)*: Hey, what's the matter? Did I leave that radio on? *(He looks over at the radio.)* No, I didn't, but—

ALL THE MONEY *(shouting)*: Uncle Sam needs money! Uncle Sam needs money!

TOMMIE *(seeing them)*: Say, I—I thought I heard someone say that.

PENNY: They said it over the radio, too, just before you went

to sleep. That's what gave us the idea.

TOMMIE: But—who are you?

PENNY: We're money, Tommie. Of course I'm only a penny—

DIME: But you can save us, Tommie, and buy War Stamps!

NICKEL: Help Uncle Sam buy the planes and tanks and guns he needs for winning this war!

TOMMIE (*crawling out and sitting on the edge of the bed*): Yeah, I—I want to help but—

2ND NICKEL: Well, that's the best way to help, Tommie. Buy War Savings Stamps regularly.

QUARTER: Tell your grandfather you want to buy a stamp with me, Tommie, instead of going to the show this week.

HALF DOLLAR: Your mother's going to buy a stamp with me.

FOUR PENNIES: Save us pennies, too, Tommie. We'll buy stamps if you save us up!

BANK ROLL: Your dad buys stamps every week out of me until he has enough for a bond.

TOMMIE: Yeah, but it would take me a long time to get a bond—and besides, I thought Uncle Sam needed a whole lot of money. Even if I buy a 10-cent stamp every week—

NICKEL: All right—say you do—that's fine—and say every boy and girl in the country buys one—

TOMMIE (*thinking*): I can see what you mean. That would count up, wouldn't it?

PENNY: Would it! How many children are there in the United States?

TOMMIE: Gee, let's see—I think the teacher told us once there were about thirty million boys and girls going to school—

DIME: Allright—there—thirty million times ten—that's three million dollars a week!

TOMMIE: Wheee-e! Boy, that's something!

FOUR PENNIES: That's a lot of change—a lot of change!

NICKEL: Yes, but think what it counts up to in a year—let's see—why, that's 156 million dollars a year!

TOMMIE: Say-y—why—why—(*rising excitedly*). We can help—we can help a lot! I'm going to start buying War Stamps right away, regularly—every week!

DIME: We knew you would, Tommie. We knew you'd want to lend us to Uncle Sam.

TOMMIE: Lend you? But I'd be glad to just—give you to him now that I know I can really help.

NICKEL: But he only wants you to lend us—so save up for a bond, and in ten years you'll get us back—with interest!

TOMMIE: Gee!

PENNY: We've got to tell the children everywhere. Listen, Tommie. (PENNY, FOUR PENNIES and all the other money form in a line and start singing to Tom-

mie who still stands left near bed.)

ALL THE MONEY (*marching back and forth as they sing the following to the tune of Jingle Bells, repeating both verses*):

Save up all your cents,  
Dimes and nickels too;  
Every bit will help  
Your country to win through!

Left—right—left—  
Left—right—left—  
V for Victory!

Oh, don't fail your Uncle Sam—

Please keep your country free!

(*They all stop marching and stand in a half circle.*)

TOMMIE (*more excited than ever*): We won't fail him! (*He crosses to center stage calling.*) Hey, boys and girls everywhere. Listen! It's important! Let's buy War Stamps every week—regularly—that's our job in this war. Are you ready to do your share?

(*Boys and girls dressed in pajamas come flocking onto the stage. Some come from the door at right, others climb through the window at left.*)

CHILDREN: Sure—of course we are. We're going to buy War Stamps every week!

(*All the children form in a line with TOMMIE leading, while the NICKELS, DIME, PENNIES,*

*etc., step backstage and watch, nodding their heads in approval and applauding now and then as the children march back and forth across the stage and sing to the tune of Jingle Bells. They make appropriate gestures as they march peppily, throwing their heads back in laughter on the "hah-hah-hah," holding their arms up like cheer leaders on the "rah, rah, rah." On the "V for Victory," they all hold their arms up with the fingers making a V.*)

CHILDREN (*singing*):

(1)

We will save our cents,  
Dimes and nickels, too;  
Every bit will help  
Our country to win through!  
We'll buy stamps each week—  
In every class and school;  
An army 30 million strong—  
To end all Axis rule.

REPEAT:

Hah—hah—hah—  
Rah—rah—rah—  
V for Victory  
We won't fail you Uncle Sam—  
We'll keep our country free!

(2)

Save up for a bond—  
Just eighteen seventy-five;  
In 10 years we will be surprised—  
We'll then have twenty-five!  
We will do our share—



Buy tanks and guns galore—  
And all the things the soldiers  
need  
To held them win this war!

REPEAT:

Hah—hah—hah—  
Rah—rah—rah—  
V for Victory  
We won't fail you Uncle  
Sam—  
We'll keep our country free!

(Now, TOMMIE steps to center  
again and looks straight out into  
the audience.)

TOMMIE: Boys and girls every-  
where—will you help Uncle  
Sam? Will you buy War  
Stamps regularly?

VOICES FROM AUDIENCE: We  
will—we will!

(TOMMIE again leads the Vic-  
tory March, all singing, and if  
possible, the audience joins in,  
too. They sing the last verse  
only. TOMMIE and children  
swing along the stage.)

ALL (repeat both verses):

We will do our share—  
Buy tanks and guns galore—  
And all the things the sol-  
diers need—  
To help them win this war!

Hah—hah—hah—  
Rah—rah—rah—  
V for Victory!

We won't fail you Uncle  
Sam—

We'll keep our country free!  
(On a great big lusty "FREE",  
there is a quick curtain.)

THE END

## For the Duration\*

A Play for Junior and Senior High Schools

### Characters

TOM HILL, American boy, 16 years  
old.

MRS. HILL, mother to Tom and  
Nancy.

NANCY HILL, sister to Tom, 15 years  
old.

MR. HILL, the father.

RONALD BATTY, English refugee,  
16 years old.

CURT HANSEN, Norwegian refugee,  
15 years old.

SETTING: The living room of the  
Hill home.

AT RISE: MRS. HILL is seated in  
easy chair downstage left; she is  
knitting. TOM HILL is upstage  
Center on divan. He is busy  
figuring, a pad held on his knee.  
Scattered around him are a few  
travel folders. After some swift  
scribbling, he suddenly looks up.

TOM (triumphantly): There! Just  
right!

MRS. HILL: What's that, Tom?

TOM: I said—just right. I've got  
it all figured out, right down to  
the last dime.

MRS. HILL: I'm glad for your  
sake, but would you mind tell-  
ing me just what you have  
figured out?

TOM: My budget.

MRS. HILL: I wish you'd stop  
talking at sixes and sevens and  
explain exactly what you mean.  
That is, unless it's something  
personal.

TOM: There's nothing personal  
about it. It's just the budget  
I've worked out for our trip.

MRS. HILL: Trip? Oh, yes—our  
trip to the mountains. So that's  
why you've been scribbling  
away for the past half-hour?

TOM: That's right. I guess all of us  
can stand a vacation. Last sum-  
mer, Dad was up to his neck in  
work at the shipyard. You were  
busy with your Red Cross train-  
ing course, Nancy was doing  
volunteer work at the Defense  
Council, and I was working at  
the grocery store. So I think  
this winter vacation idea is a  
swell one. Just think . . . spend-  
ing Christmas up in the moun-  
tains. Plenty of snow for skiing,  
good ice for skating. It'll be fun,  
don't you think?

MRS. HILL: Yes, I think it will be  
fun, Tom.

TOM: I've saved an even forty dol-  
lars from what I earned this past  
summer. Part of it I'll have to  
use for a new pair of skis. The  
rest I'll use for ski lessons. I

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hear they have a good instructor up there.

MRS. HILL: What do you intend doing with the balance of the money?

TOM: I'll probably spend it up there at the mountains. *(He picks up a travel folder and looks at it.)* Bald Mountain Lodge, here we come! *(He rises and starts to pace back and forth.)* Golly! I've been thinking about this vacation for the past two months—ever since I suggested it to you and Dad. Aren't you excited about it, Mom?

MRS. HILL: Yes, I suppose I am.

TOM *(He crosses to her)*: Look, Mom, you don't mind my using this money on my vacation, do you?

MRS. HILL: No. I don't mind. It's your money, Tom. You've earned it. I told you that you could spend it any way you saw fit. *(Tom crosses to divan and sits down.)* You mentioned that several boys from school were planning to be at Bald Mountain during Christmas week.

TOM: They—er—were, but I guess they've changed their minds.

MRS. HILL: That's too bad. It would have been company for you. *(Pause.)* Why did they change their minds?

TOM *(slowly)*: They . . . . . they said they had other uses for their money. *(He pauses.)*

MRS. HILL: Yes? *(Suggesting it.)*

Perhaps they want to use it to buy Christmas presents.

TOM: Not exactly. They're using it to buy War Savings Bonds. Can you imagine that!

MRS. HILL: Yes, I can. Certainly it's far from wrong to buy War Bonds.

TOM: Don't misunderstand me. What I really mean is—if they were going, I'd be sure of having some fun. *(Recovering his enthusiasm.)* But that's all right. I'll probably meet some other fellows around my own age. Any way, it's the skiing and the rest of the sports that interest me. *(There is a pause, during which Tom stares at his Mother.)* Mom, when you sit back like that, and knit fast, it means you've got something on your mind.

MRS. HILL *(still knitting away)*: Is that so? *(Nancy enters, unobserved, and stands listening.)*

TOM: Yes, it is so. You've got something on your mind this very minute. I can tell every time. *(Pause.)* I'll bet you're mad because I'm going to spend my money on a new pair of skis and some lessons. *(Pause.)* Maybe you want me to put it into War Bonds?

MRS. HILL: Have I said that?

TOM: No. But you sort of look it. *(Grumbling a bit.)* After all, it's my money. I earned it. You said I could do anything I wanted to with it.

NANCY *(crossing down)*: Tom, you ought to be ashamed of yourself talking to mother that way. You stop it.

TOM: No one asked you to stick your nose into my affairs.

NANCY: You're nothing but a spoiled, selfish brat.

TOM: Is that so?

NANCY: Yes, that's so, Tom Hill.

TOM: Now, you listen to me, Nancy.

NANCY *(mimicking him)*: Now, you listen to me.

MRS. HILL *(quietly)*: That will be all.

NANCY: But, mother—

MRS. HILL: I won't have you two bickering. In the first place, Nancy, you had no right to break into our conversation.

*(Tom looks triumphant.)* As for you, Tom, you're sixteen, a young man. I expect you to behave as such. As far as your money is concerned, if you wish to spend it during our vacation, then by all means do so. It's your money; you earned it.

TOM: All I meant is that I—

MRS. HILL *(firmly)*: The subject is closed. *(Nancy picks up a magazine and drops into chair.)* MRS. HILL resumes her knitting. Tom takes a small roll of bills from his pocket and starts counting them. Satisfied, he rises and crosses to the desk, where he tries a drawer which is locked. May I help you, Tom?

TOM: I'm looking for the key to the

desk. I want to lock up my money.

MRS. HILL: It's on top of the desk. *(Tom looks around, finds key and unlocks drawer. He places money inside, relocks desk. Goes down to Mother and holds out key.)*

TOM: You'd better hold this, mother.

MRS. HILL: I believe it will be all right for you to keep it. You might want your money in a hurry. *(Tom puts key in pocket. He crosses to divan, picks up book and starts to read.)* I thought you were going roller skating this afternoon, Nancy?

NANCY: I am. I'm waiting for Ronald to call for me.

MRS. HILL: You mean Ronald Batty, that English boy?

NANCY: Yes.

MRS. HILL: He seems like a very gentlemanly chap.

NANCY: He's an awfully nice boy.

TOM *(striving to be à la English)*: My word! Tally-ho! And all that sort of rot, you know.

NANCY: Ronald could give you a few lessons in good manners.

TOM: Aw! He's too polite.

MRS. HILL: There's no such thing as being too polite. *(A pause then an offstage bell is heard.)*

NANCY: That must be Ronald. I'll let him in. *(She exits. A pause, then her voice and Ronald's are heard.)*

RONALD: So sorry to be late, Nancy.

NANCY: That's quite all right, Ronald. Here, I'll take your coat.

RONALD: Oh, thank you so much. NANCY: Come into the living-room. I'm sure mother would like to see you.

RONALD: Righto! (NANCY and RONALD enter.)

NANCY: Mother, you know Ronald.

MRS. HILL: Yes, of course. (RONALD crosses to her.) How are you, Ronald?

RONALD: Very well, thank you, Mrs. Hill. I trust you've been well, too?

MRS. HILL: Yes—very well.

NANCY: I'll be right with you. Just want to get my skates. Excuse me, please. (NANCY exits. RONALD drops into a chair.)

MRS. HILL: You've met my son, Tom, I believe.

RONALD (he rises): Of course. How are you, Tom?

TOM (during all this he has been reading book; nods without looking up): Not bad. (RONALD, embarrassed a bit, sits again.)

MRS. HILL: How do you like our American schools, Ronald?

RONALD: Oh, very much. Very interesting. Rather different from our English schools.

MRS. HILL: I imagine that's true.

RONALD: I tell you, I've had to plug in order to keep up. But I'm managing quite well. (NANCY enters, carrying roller skates.)

NANCY: Ready, Ronald?

RONALD (he rises): Quite. Your mother and I have been talking about your very fine American schools as compared to our English ones.

NANCY: Have you heard from home recently?

RONALD: Yes. I had a letter this morning.

NANCY (anxiously): Everything is all right, I hope?

RONALD: Yes. Mother is quite cheerful. She wrote that father would be home on leave within a few days.

NANCY: Ronald's father is an RAF pilot. He's seen a lot of action, hasn't he, Ronald?

RONALD: Yes, a great deal. He's been in service 2 years, you know. Mother said that father wrote and told her what fine pilots the Americans are. He wrote that they're helping no end.

MRS. HILL: I'm glad to hear that.

RONALD (as though trying to avoid any further discussion): Shall we leave, Nancy?

NANCY: Yes, perhaps we'd better go. The rest of the kids will be waiting. (RONALD fumbles in pocket and takes out a slip of paper.)

RONALD: Mrs. Hill, do you know where I can get a check cashed? It's my regular monthly spending allowance. It's too late for me to get to the bank.

MRS. HILL: If it isn't too large, I can cash it for you.

RONALD: It's for 20 dollars.

MRS. HILL: I'm afraid not. I'm sure I haven't that much money on hand. Er, I wonder—(She catches Tom's eye and looks at him significantly.)

RONALD: Quite all right, Mrs. Hill. Sorry I mentioned it. Well, good-bye, all.

MRS. HILL: Just a moment. (Mrs. Hill rises, goes to desk. She writes a few lines on piece of paper, then crosses to RONALD and hands him the paper.) Take this note to Mr. Baker, the druggist at the corner. I've asked him to cash your check.

RONALD: Thank you so much. This will help me out considerably. I believe that store sells War Savings Bonds.

MRS. HILL: Yes, they do. I've bought some there.

RONALD: So much the better.

NANCY (inquiringly): So much the better?

RONALD: You see, every month, for the past 6 months, I've been taking eighteen dollars and seventy-five cents from my allowance and using it to buy a War Bond.

NANCY: You've been doing that?

RONALD: Yes.

MRS. HILL: That's a patriotic gesture, Ronald—and a big one, too.

RONALD: I like to think of it as something more than a gesture. I like to think of it as something of a duty to a country that's

offering me—well, shall we say, sanctuary. Of course I'm devoted to my own country, the same as all loyal Englishmen. When I'm old enough, I'm going home to enlist. Meanwhile, as I say, the United States is offering me protection; and in order to maintain that protection, she needs money.

MRS. HILL: And so every month you take practically your whole allowance and put it into War Bonds.

NANCY: That means you only have a dollar and twenty-five cents a month left for spending money.

RONALD: As you Americans say: So what? What's left is enough to go to an occasional cinema, and to take Nancy roller skating. (Briskly). Well, Nancy, we're off. Nice to have seen you again, Mrs. Hill.

MRS. HILL: Come again, Ronald.

RONALD: Thank you. (He and NANCY start to exit. RONALD pauses.) Cheerio, Tom. (Tom, who during all this has been listening, nods mutely in assent, RONALD and NANCY exit. Mrs. Hill then resumes her knitting. Tom resumes his reading. After a long pause, Tom looks up.)

TOM: Mom.

MRS. HILL: Yes, Tom?

TOM: Sort of a funny fellow, isn't he?

MRS. HILL: Ronald funny? If you call being frank and wholesome

and full of patriotism funny, then I guess perhaps you're right.

TOM: I don't think you get what I mean.

MRS. HILL: And I don't think you get what he meant, or what I mean. *(Before TOM can answer, the sound of an offstage door bell is heard.)* See who it is, Tom. *TOM exits. After a pause, the voices of TOM and CURT HANSEN are heard.)*

TOM: Yeah, O. K. Can't I take care of it? My mother is resting.

CURT: But it will not take long. I would appreciate it if you would allow me to speak to her.

TOM: Well, I'm not sure.

MRS. HILL *(she calls out)*: Whoever it is, Tom, have him come in.

TOM *(calling back)*: O. K., Mom. *(TOM and CURT enter. CURT is carrying a newsboy's cloth bag. CURT ducks a little bow in the direction of MRS. HILL.)* This is the new newsboy. He goes to our school. He's in Nancy's class.

CURT: Yes, I am Curt Hansen.

MRS. HILL: The Norwegian boy. I've heard of you. You live over on Water Street.

CURT *(again bowing)*: That is correct. I live with my parents.

MRS. HILL: Your English is very good. You have hardly an accent.

CURT: In Norway I studied English for five years.

MRS. HILL: That explains it. Won't you sit down?

CURT: Thank you—no. I have only a minute. *(TOM sits on divan.)*

MRS. HILL: What can I do for you, Curt?

CURT: As Tom has told you, I am your new newsboy. I have just taken over this route. *(He pauses.)*

MRS. HILL *(encouragingly)*: Yes—go on.

CURT: Perhaps you know that we newspaper boys are selling War Savings Stamps.

MRS. HILL: I know. I've bought some.

CURT: Recently? Yes?

MRS. HILL: Now that you mention it, I haven't. I'm afraid I've been a bit neglectful. I take it you would like to sell me some?

CURT *(eagerly)*: Yes, very much. It would be an honor.

MRS. HILL: How many have you?

CURT: I will see. *(He takes a paper folder from a pocket and starts to fumble.)* I do not think I have many left. Business has been O. K. *(drawing forth some stamps)*. Here we are. I have but eight 25-cent stamps left.

MRS. HILL: Tom, please get my purse. It's in the desk in one of the pigeonholes. *(TOM rises and crosses to desk. He brings forth purse from pigeonhole. He goes down to MOTHER and hands her the purse, then resumes seat on divan. She fumbles with*

*purse. Takes out some money and hands it to CURT.)* There you are, Curt. I'm sorry you haven't any more stamps. *(CURT hands her the stamps. He takes the money and puts it in pocket.)*

CURT: Perhaps if I stop in next week, you may wish to buy some. Yes?

MRS. HILL: I'll make it a point to buy some. *(At this point a noise is heard offstage.)*

TOM: That must be Dad.

MRS. HILL: He's home early. I hope nothing is wrong. *(MR. HILL enters. He crosses to WIFE.)*

MR. HILL: Hello, mother. *(He gives her brief peck on cheek.)* How are you?

MRS. HILL: Nothing wrong, dear, I hope.

MR. HILL: I've got to go back tonight and give the late production shift a hand. So I left early. Thought I'd get a little rest.

MRS. HILL: You need it. You're working very hard.

MR. HILL: How have you been, Tom?

TOM: Fine, dad. *(MR. HILL gazes at CURT, who is preparing to leave.)*

MRS. HILL: This is Curt Hansen, our newspaper boy. He's been selling me some War Stamps.

MR. HILL *(he drops into a chair)*: Good for him.

MRS. HILL: Curt is that Norwe-

gian boy who lives on Water Street.

MR. HILL: Is that so? And you're out selling War Savings Stamps, eh, Curt?

CURT: Yes, sir. The two dollars worth of stamps that Mrs. Hill bought will buy a soldier a good, warm blanket.

MR. HILL: And four dollars will buy him a steel helmet. *(Laughing.)* You see, Curt, we read the same material. Pretty interesting reading, I call it.

CURT: I think so, sir. Well, goodbye, everyone; and thank you, Mrs. Hill.

TOM *(he rises)*: I'll see you to the door, Curt.

CURT: Thank you. *(TOM and CURT exit.)*

MR. HILL: I think our plans are due for a little change. I just learned about it today; or perhaps I should say, I just decided it today.

MRS. HILL: I don't understand what you mean.

MR. HILL: I'll wait for Tom. It means as much to him as it does to you and me.

MRS. HILL: You sound ominous.

MR. HILL: Nothing as bad as that.

MRS. HILL: Now you've aroused my curiosity. *(TOM enters.)*

MR. HILL: Sit down, Tom. You'll be interested in what I have to say. *(TOM drops on to divan.)*

TOM: No bad news, dad?

MR. HILL: I wouldn't exactly call it bad news. *(He pauses a*

*couple of seconds before continuing.)* I'm sorry to announce that our winter vacation is off. *(Mrs. Hill raises her eyebrows. Tom stiffens.)*

TOM: Our vacation—Off? Dad, you're kidding.

MR. HILL: I am not.

MRS. HILL: What happened, dear?

MR. HILL: The vice-president called me in this morning and told me that the shipyard is going to take on three thousand more men. And that means a lot more work for the production department, which in turn means more work for me. It means that I'll have to work every Sunday.

MRS. HILL *(dismayed)*: Even Sundays? Oh, dear.

TOM: Never mind about that. What about our vacation? Why didn't you tell him you were going to go anyhow. I'll bet if you had, he wouldn't have said a thing.

MR. HILL: I think you're right, Tom. I don't think there would have been a word said to me. He knows I'd like a vacation; he knows perhaps I need one. If I had wanted to make an issue of the point, the vice-president wouldn't have objected at all.

TOM: Then why didn't you say something, dad?

MRS. HILL: You're being quite stubborn, Tom.

MR. HILL: I'll answer your question this way, Tom. *(He crosses to mantle and takes down small modern boat model.)* Two months ago the officials at the shipyard handed out a number of these Liberty ship models to employees whose work has been outstanding. I was lucky enough to get one; and I regard this model as a symbol.

TOM: How do you mean that?

MR. HILL: Not only do I regard it as a personal symbol, but also as a symbol of liberty. These Liberty boats we are building are well named, for they carry to our allies and to our own boys much needed supplies . . . food, guns, oil, ammunition, machinery, tanks and dozens of other vital, life-giving necessities. These boats are the connecting link between us and liberty.

TOM: I know all that, but—

MR. HILL *(interrupting)*: The people of the other United Nations aren't asking for any vacation. Our soldiers and sailors, the men of the merchant marine, aren't asking for any vacation.

TOM: That's because they have a job to do.

MRS. HILL: And what have we to do, Tom?

MR. HILL: Let me tell you something interesting, son. To build a four hundred and forty-one foot Liberty ship it costs approximately one million eight

hundred thousand dollars. Twenty-two hundred and fifty tons of steel plating go into it; and it takes twenty-seven thousand rivets to hold such a boat together.

MRS. HILL: The other night you mentioned how much a rivet cost to drive into a ship.

MR. HILL: I did. It costs ten cents to drive a rivet into a ship. That means that each time such a rivet is driven, Uncle Sam has to sell a ten-cent defense stamp to cover the cost. You figure that an average riveter can drive one a minute and that there are twenty-seven thousand rivets in a Liberty ship, and you'll get an idea what goes into the making of a ship.

TOM: That means that one of these boats costs two thousand and seven hundred dollars just for its rivets.

MR. HILL: That's right, Tom. I could go on and give you yards of figures and facts, but that isn't necessary. Just let me add this: to build ships you need money and manpower. A great many Americans can supply the money to buy bonds. Men like myself can supply the manpower. And men like myself can also buy bonds.

MRS. HILL: The money that we were going to spend on our vacation can very easily be put into War bonds.

MR. HILL: That's just what I had in mind. *(He crosses to mantle, replaces model, and then goes to a chair and sits down.)* So I'm sorry to disappoint you, Tom. I know you were counting on this vacation, but this business of building ships is more important. Remember, if every one wanted to take a vacation we wouldn't be in this war very long *(laughs)*. And that is my lecture for today. Class dismissed. After that, I think you'd better go out to the kitchen and drown your sorrow in a long glass of milk. *(Mr. Hill picks up a newspaper and commences to read it. Mrs. Hill continues with her knitting. Tom, after scratching his head, quietly arises. He crosses to the desk, where he takes the key from his pocket and unlocks it. He reaches into drawer and takes out his money, which he stuffs into his pocket. As Tom starts to exit, he pauses long enough to exchange glances with his Mother. He then leaves. A fairly long pause follows.)* MR. HILL *suddenly looks up.* Where's Tom?

MRS. HILL: Tom went out. *(Pause.)* He took his money with him—all of it.

MR. HILL: I hope he didn't take any offense at the way I spoke to him. After all, losing his vacation is sort of a big disappointment to him.

Mrs. Hill: So I gathered.

Mr. Hill: I hope he doesn't go out and spend all of his money.

Mrs. Hill: From the look on his face when he left, I know that's just what he intends doing.

Mr. Hill (*he puts the paper down*): That isn't right. It's silly. Why he may come back with something trivial and expensive to boot.

Mrs. Hill: What he comes back with may be expensive, but I'll guarantee it won't be trivial.

Mr. Hill: What's that? I don't follow you.

Mrs. Hill: I'll guarantee that Tom will be back here inside fifteen minutes with a fifty-dollar War Bond.

*THE END*

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